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Saturday 27 June 2009

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E-P1



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Lens
test

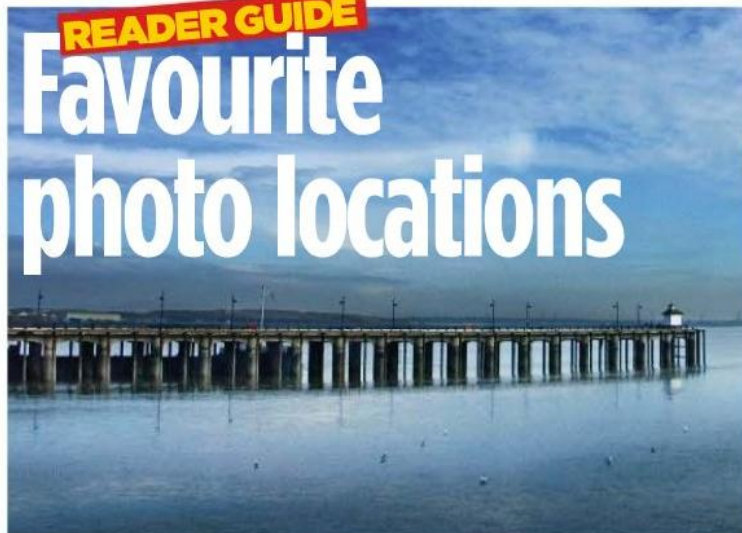
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READER GUIDE

Favourite
photo locations



SIGMA



OUR WORLD

Tom Servais: Born in Miami in 1953, Servais moved to California at the age of 20 to 'find himself' and pursue surfing. After taking several photography classes, he began his career as a photographer with Surfer magazine. Fueled by the joy of turning his passion into a career, he travels the world in pursuit of an endless summer.

Photo data: SIGMA 18-250mm F3.5-6.3 DC OS HSM, 1/1,000-second exposure at f/6.3.

TOM SERVAIS SHOOTS THE WORLD WITH A SIGMA LENS.

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Amateur Photographer For everyone who loves photography

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Charles Twist
on the lure of
the less obvious
details of the
landscape

© CHARLES TWIST

Send us your pictures

To have your pictures published in Gallery, send in a selection of up to ten images. They can be either a selection of different images or all have the same theme. Digital files sent on CD should be saved in a Photoshop-compatible format, such as JPEG or TIFF, with a contact sheet and submission form. See the features sidebar on the right-hand side of our homepage at www.amateurphotographer.co.uk for details. We cannot publish images without the necessary technical details. Each RGB image should be a minimum of 2480 pixels along its longest length. Transparencies and prints are also accepted. We recommend that transparencies are sent without glass mounts and posted via Special Delivery. For transparencies, prints or discs to be returned you must include an SAE with sufficient postage.

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Paul Whiting
explains why time
and patience are key
ingredients in the
perfect landscape

© PAUL WHITING

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In search of love



Damien
Demolder
Editor

I'm far from old, but even in my relatively short history I've discovered that love at first sight simply does

not exist. Love is deep and lasting, increases with time, and needs time. The feeling so often confused with love at that first sighting, in my experience at least, owes more to lust or infatuation than true love. True love requires a greater knowledge, an in-depth understanding and a shared passage of life that encompasses the ups and downs of existence – good times and bad, and especially the mundane.

Nowadays, people live together before they get married. Passed off as financial expedience and 'being modern', this type of arrangement is most often an extension of the dating process and provides added surety that true love exists – or may do in the future. To put it crudely, perhaps: try before you buy.

I freely confess to having an eye for the cameras. It's a roving eye too, as I'm a bit of a flirt. I enjoy the company of compacts (more fun) as much as I do DSLRs (more intense), the excitement of the new as well as the perception of the old. I'm no fool, though. I'm fully aware that I'm not in love with the Olympus E-P1. Right now, it's just an overwhelming, heart-racing desire – but with time...

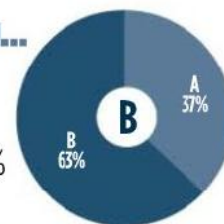
Our question of the week

In AP 13 June we asked...

What kind of camera design would you prefer?

You answered...

A Modern and sleek 37%
B Retro and cool 63%



This week we ask...

Based on your first impressions, do you think the E-P1 will be a success?

A Yes B No C Don't know

Vote online
www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

COVER PICTURE © ADRIAN CAMPFIELD

Shooting data for image:
Tokina 12-24mm f/4 AF PRO DX lens
and Nikon D70.
Camera settings:
Aperture f/4.0
Shutter speed 1/3200 sec
Focal length 12.0mm
ISO 250



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Amateur Photographer Magazine

"Definition & resolution are also excellent and without the aggressive sharpness for which Japanese optical forms have been noted...
A first-class, state-of-the-art lens" *Geoffrey Crawley*

"a state-of-the-art lens"

91%
rating

British Journal of Photography

"Very well designed, engineered and optically excellent lens that can stand shoulder to shoulder with the main marque, but at a more affordable price" *Jonathan Eastland*

"optically excellent"

Tokina's all-new 12-24mm lens, designed for use exclusively on Canon and Nikon Digital SLR cameras, having an APS-C sized sensor. This gives the digital photographer an ultra wide-angle zoom lens that has the equivalent of an 18-36mm zoom range on a 35mm film camera, while maintaining a bright constant aperture of f/4.

It features a chrome-plated brass mount plate and all-metal zoom unit that can stand up to regular use, while advanced polycarbonate outer lens barrels reduce the weight of the lens, making it a pleasure to carry.

The chosen lens of freelance photojournalist **Paul Robinson**.

"Looking at the world through a lens is fascinating and capturing the moment is something very special. I enjoy being in the great outdoors and capturing the mood, atmosphere and emotion plays an important part in my work. I love the freedom of expression that photography gives me and Tokina lenses have enabled me to produce images that I never thought possible."

10-17mm f/3.5-4.5
AT-X DX FISHEYE



AF 11-16mm f/2.8
AT-X PRO DX



16-50mm f/2.8
AT-X PRO DX



50-135mm f/2.8
AT-X PRO DX



AF 35mm f/2.8 MACRO
AT-X PRO DX



100mm f/2.8
AT-X AF PRO D



80-400mm f/4.5-5.6
AT-X AF D



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News

News | Analysis | Comment | PhotoDiary 27/6/09

The process was somewhat undermined by two other officers posing for photos with tourists while their colleague completed the paperwork

Photo editor in terror stop, page 7

E-P1 to challenge DSLR 'clumsiness' | First in 'new system' out in July

Olympus bids to 'rewrite' photo history



OLYMPUS claims its first Micro Four Thirds camera, the 'retro-style' E-P1, will rewrite the history books when it arrives in the UK next month. Combining the 'timeless style' of the classic Olympus Pen series with the 'mirror-less' build of the new Micro Four Thirds digital format, the much-hyped Live View-enabled camera boasts an effective resolution of 12.3 million pixels.

While traditionalists may balk at the absence of an optical viewfinder and built-in flash, Olympus is keen to stress that both these features are available as optional accessories (see page 6).

The hotshoe will accept external units from Olympus's E-system flash range, as well

as a new FL-14 flashgun that coincides with the launch.

Olympus has confirmed that the E-P1 is the first in a new camera system. It will be available in silver or white colour options and cost £699 with a new 14-42mm f/3.5 lens. It will also be available with a 17mm f/2.8 pancake lens, plus an external viewfinder, in a kit costing £749. A twin lens kit will also go on sale.

Touted as a 'perfect marriage of simplicity, style and performance', the E-P1 features 'HD' (1280x720-pixel) video recording and equivalent ISO sensitivity that can be expanded to G400.

The camera is encased in an aluminium and 'stainless-steel' body and uses a 12.3MP Live MOS imaging sensor, plus a new imaging

processor called Truepic V.

A UK spokesman declined to reveal the name of the imaging sensor manufacturer.

Technology borrowed from the firm's DSLRs includes six Art Filters: Pop Art, Pin Hole, Soft Focus, Pale & Light Colour, Light Tone and Grainy Film.

Additional firepower comes in the form of face detection, Shadow Adjustment Technology and four image aspect ratios, including 16:9. Claimed to deliver 'DSLR quality in compact form', the E-P1 boasts built-in image stabilisation, Supersonic Wave Filter dust reduction and a top shutter speed of 1/4000sec.

Exposure compensation of $\pm 3\text{EV}$ in $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{1}{2}$ or 1EV steps is possible, as is simultaneous raw and JPEG file recording.

The SD card-compatible newcomer sports a 3in LCD screen (230,000 dots), a 'level gauge', multiple exposure and a maximum burst rate of three frames per second up to a maximum of ten raw-format files.

Powered by a Li-Ion battery, the camera incorporates an 11-point AF system, as well as aperture and shutter priority, alongside full manual exposure control.

Filter effects will include yellow, orange and red, while auto gradation adjustment is designed to prevent 'blown highlights and blocked-in shadows'.

The E-P1 measures 120.6x69.9x36.4mm (excluding protrusions) and weighs 335g (body only).

● For more information, plus pictures, turn to page 6

SNAP SHOT

50mm f/1.1 lens

Cosina has released a 50mm Voigtlander-branded Nokton f/1.1 lens. Touted as a fast standard lens, the optic features ten aperture blades and is built from seven elements in six groups. The VM-mount lens, which boasts an aspherical element, is available from UK importer Robert White Photographic, priced £950. Call 01202 723 046.



DSLR heist

Tens of thousands of pounds worth of top-of-the-range Nikon cameras have been stolen from a UK camera dealer in a suspected fraud. Robert White Photographic Limited, which is based in Dorset, said the haul included four D3x digital SLRs, four D3 bodies and four 14-24mm lenses. For full details see next week's 'News'.

Late news

The terror law watchdog warned police they face possible prosecution if they use anti-terrorism legislation to stop people taking pictures of officers. Lord Carlile said it is 'inexcusable' for police to 'interfere with photographers' rights'. Full details in next week's 'News'.

Casio Exilim EX-H10 boasts '24mm' wideangle

CASIO has expanded its Exilim family of 'ultra-slim' digital compacts with the launch of the 12.1-million-pixel EX-H10, sporting a 24mm zoom lens.

Marketed as an ideal camera for travelling, the £299 model combines

a 10x optical zoom with 4x digital zoom power.

The f/3.2 lens is claimed to deliver the 35mm viewing angle equivalent of a 24-240mm zoom and includes an aspherical lens element.

The SD and SDHC memory card-compatible newcomer

features a 3in LCD screen (230,400-dot resolution) and a claimed top equivalent ISO sensitivity of 3200.

Also on board is a maximum shutter speed of 1/2000sec and a '1,000-shot' battery life.

Exposure compensation of



$\pm 2\text{EV}$ is possible in $\frac{1}{3}\text{EV}$ steps.

Features also include 'Make-up Shot' and face recognition.

PhotoDiary

A week of photographic opportunity

WEDNESDAY

24 JUNE

EXHIBITION Bill Brandt, until 18 July at Chris Beetles Gallery, London SW1Y 6QB. Tel: 0207 839 7551. Visit www.chrisbeetles.com. **EXHIBITION** Diane Arbus, until 27 June at Timothy Taylor Gallery, London W1K 2EX. Tel: 0207 409 3344. Visit www.timothytaylorgallery.com.

THURSDAY

25 JUNE

EXHIBITION Heart Throb: The Golden Age of the Pop Icon, includes work by Terry O'Neill and Albert Watson, until 3 July at The Mall Galleries, London SW1. Visit www.mallgalleries.org.uk. **EXHIBITION** The Last Things ('unseen' Ministry of Defence photos) by David Moore, until 5 September at Focus Gallery, Wolverhampton WV1 1DU. Tel: 01902 552 055. Visit www.wolverhamptonart.org.uk.

FRIDAY

26 JUNE

EXHIBITION Sir Peter Blake Polaroids, until 1 August at Opus Gallery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE3 4ES. Visit www.opus-art.com. **EXHIBITION** Satellites (a journey through Eastern Europe) by Magnum agency photographer Jonas Bendiksen, until 9 Aug at PM Gallery, London W5 5EQ. Tel: 020 8567 1227. Visit www.ealing.gov.uk.



© SIR PETER BLAKE

SATURDAY

27 JUNE

DON'T MISS Explore Your Digital SLR – a photo course (10am–4pm) at Chirk Castle, Wrexham LL14 5AF. Tel: Jean Napier on 0778 228 791. Visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk. **DON'T MISS** Going Digital Photography Workshop (10am–4pm) – at Petworth House and Park, West Sussex GU28 0AE. Tel: 01798 343 929. Visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk.

SUNDAY

28 JUNE

EXHIBITION Music and Fashion, until 31 August at National Conservation Centre, Liverpool L1 6HZ. Visit www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk. **EXHIBITION** Talking about a Revolution... by John 'Hoppy' Hopkins, ends today at Idea Generation Gallery, London E2 7JB. Tel: 0207 749 6850. Visit www.ideageneration.co.uk.

MONDAY

29 JUNE

EXHIBITION Photographs of Dartmoor and the coast by Adrian Oakes, until 30 June at The Church House, Devon TQ13 7TA. Tel: 01364 621 321. **DON'T MISS** Garden photography workshop (9.30am–4pm, repeated 30 June), at Nymans, near Havering Heath, West Sussex RH17 6EB. Tel: 01444 405 250. Visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk.

TUESDAY

30 JUNE

EXHIBITION Fauna by Antonio Gesmundo, until 11 July at Rathbone, London W1T 2JZ. Tel: 0207 636 6699. Visit www.rathbonegallery.com. **EXHIBITION** The Last Iceberg by Camille Seaman, until 3 July at Hoopers Gallery, London EC1R 0AA. Tel: 0207 490 3907. Visit www.hoopersgallery.co.uk.

© ANTONIO GESMUNDO

News



A new flash (FL-14) will go on sale to coincide with the launch next month

Olympus E-P1 to take on DSLRs

OLYMPUS will be hoping the E-P1 will emulate the success of its classic Pen series of film cameras, 17m of which were sold worldwide, says the firm.

Designed by Yoshihisa Maitani to be 'as easy to use and carry as a pen', the original Pen was launched in 1959 as a half-frame model.

Olympus bills the E-P1 as a 'groundbreaking' camera for the digital era, and says it comes at a time 'when mirrors are no longer a necessary component for digital cameras with interchangeable lenses'.

Olympus has confirmed that the E-P1 will be the first in a series and that a future model will include a built-in electronic viewfinder.

Key to its success will be whether the compact-style Micro Four Thirds model can

convert a large swathe of compact camera users, many of whom are said to want a DSLR but are put off by price, size, weight and complicated controls.

The E-P1 adopts the Micro Four Thirds format, which allows the development of smaller cameras by removing the mirror box that features in an SLR. Photographers compose their shots in Live View, using the camera's LCD monitor or electronic viewfinder.

E-P1 accessories will include a new flash (FL-14), external optical viewfinder (VF-1) and a leather camera case.

The E-P1 will first go on show at the Jessops store in New Oxford Street, London, on 25 June. Photographer David Bailey will be there from 6pm.

Anglea Nicholson
Technical editor

After the overall concept and its beautiful design, the thing that excites me most about the Olympus E-P1 isn't actually mentioned in the specification sheet or the press releases. Although these documents provide plenty to whet my photographic appetite, it is the fact that, according to an Olympus representative, the E-P1 has a weaker anti-aliasing filter than previous Olympus cameras that is making me impatient to get my hands on one. This could make a significantly positive difference to the level of detail visible in the images it captures. It is thought to play a significant role in the impressive performance of the Panasonic Lumix DMC-G1, which is believed to have the same sensor as the E-P1. If Olympus has managed to produce a sleek Micro Four Thirds camera with DSLR-level control and excellent detail resolution, it could be a huge success.

See next week's News for an interview with Olympus's Digital SLR product strategy department manager

Micro Four Thirds lenses

The E-P1 will be launched alongside two Olympus Micro Four Thirds lenses: the M Zuiko Digital 17mm f/2.8 Pancake and the M Zuiko Digital ED 14-42mm f/3.5-5.6. They deliver the 35mm equivalent of a 34mm and

28-84mm lens respectively. The 17mm pancake

lens has a six-elements-in-four-groups build and contains an aspherical lens. Measuring 57x22mm, it features five blades and has a filter size of 37mm.

The 14-42mm features nine elements in eight groups and boasts two aspherical elements. The 150g lens has a close-focusing distance of 0.25m and measures 62x43.5mm.

Both lenses will be available as kits with the E-P1 camera body. The E-P1 is also compatible with existing Four Thirds lenses, and OM optics via an optional adapter.

An optional optical viewfinder will be available for the E-P1 at a price yet to be announced





Reporter bag

Kata has launched three new Photo Reporter camera bags. The bags' compartments can be customised using internal dividers. Prices start at £129.95 for the PR-420 model, which is claimed to be able to carry up to two DSLRs, lenses and a flash. For details call 01293 583 300 or visit www.bogenimaging.co.uk.

Photo shocker

A family portrait ended up on a supermarket advertising poster thousands of miles away after it appeared in an internet blog. The Smith family from the United States said that no permission was sought from either them or the photographer over use of the image, which was spotted on a poster by a friend in Prague, Czech Republic. The store owner promised to remove the advert.



Expert tuition

AP has teamed up with Kew Gardens to give five readers the chance to take part in a masterclass with renowned photographer Clive Nichols. At the event, on 15 July, Clive (pictured above) will share top tips on garden photography and flora at the gardens. Readers will spend the remainder of the day exploring the 300-acre site. The project is part of Kew Gardens' 250th anniversary celebrations. For details visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/competitions/5741. To find out more about events taking place to mark Kew's 250th anniversary, visit <http://250.kew.org>.

Photo rucksack

A photo rucksack designed by wildlife photographer Andy Rouse has gone on sale. The Viper, priced £299, is available exclusively from Warehouse Express.

Photo editor hit by terror law



Committed to defending your photographic rights!

THE editor of a leading UK-based photography website says he was stopped by police for 'taking photos of iconic

landmarks' in central London.

Mark Goldstein, who edits PhotographyBLOG, said he was stopped on 8 June under Section 44 of the Terrorism Act by police targeting 'individuals with cameras who are photographing famous buildings'.

Goldstein (pictured right), who was on the south bank of the River Thames near City Hall, said: 'After informing the officer that I run a photography website – and giving her my business card – I was issued with a Form 5090 (X), with no actual search taking place.'

He added: 'The whole process was somewhat undermined by two other officers posing for photos with tourists while their colleague completed the paperwork.'

'I can only conclude that it was the bright pink Casio camera that I was testing at



COURTESY MARK GOLDSTEIN

the time that attracted the police officer's attention.'

A police spokeswoman told AP that for security reasons the force was not prepared to divulge whether or not officers have stepped up anti-terrorism operations in the capital.

'We don't talk about intelligence or security levels,' she said, adding that in the past she has also been stopped while taking pictures using a compact camera, at nearby Tower Bridge.



REUTERS

Paedophile fears trigger photo ban



Committed to defending your photographic rights!

for our guests,' she said, adding that the park cannot guarantee where the pictures will end up.

'Our lifeguards are there to save lives and not to monitor people taking pictures of children.'

She claimed that its policy has been further endorsed by subsequent reports of a police investigation into the alleged distribution of indecent children's photos centred on a nursery in Devon.

'If it is happening in a nursery, then who knows if it is happening in a [holiday] park,' she said.

In a statement, Haven said: 'Our holiday parks provide many locations for family photographs and we regret that some locations are restricted in line with usual practice at many other leisure facilities in the UK.'

The Haven spokeswoman said that the ban – which also applies to the company's outdoor pools – has been in place for four or five years and is outlined on signs placed by the pool.

A FEAR of paedophiles was behind a holiday park's decision to impose a ban on pictures that meant a father was not allowed to photograph his own son, AP has learned.

Andrew Norris told the BBC that swimming pool lifeguards stopped him photographing his four-month-old son at an indoor pool run by Haven in Chichester, West Sussex.

Norris branded the move – which took place during the recent school half-term break – as 'political correctness gone mad'.

A lifeguard told him that the ban was due to 'privacy laws'.

Speaking to AP, a Haven spokeswoman admitted that the ban was to guard against the risk of any paedophiles among its guests.

'We need to provide a safe and secure environment



AMATEUR

May forum winner 'first class'

AMATEUR Photographer Editor Damien Demolder has chosen forum user '4BIKER2' as the May winner of the AP website's monthly photo competition, which carried the theme 'Looking through'.

Describing the winning entry as 'first-class photography', Damien added: 'The lighting is wonderful, picking out the man's face against that deep shaded background. The exposure is perfect too, with the brightness levels beyond the window allowing enough detail without being distracting.'

Damien added: 'I love the backlit glass, the suspended fork, the sidelit railings and the way the light streaks up the subject's arm so it appears to twist out of nowhere.'

'The toning sets it all off brilliantly too. It really is an excellent shot, that proves it is worth carrying a camera all the time.'

The winner bags a ten-million-pixel Nikon Coolpix S560 compact and an Amateur Photographer mug. For details visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk.

Canon unveils portable printers

CANON has bolstered its family of portable dye-sublimation printers with the addition of the Selphy CP790 (pictured) and CP780.

Sporting a 3in LCD screen and a carry handle, the Selphy CP790 is claimed to be able to deliver a postcard-size print (100x148mm or

4x6in) in 47secs.

Optional paper cassettes also enable 'wide size' (100x200mm) and 'credit-card' size (54x86mm) printing.

Due out in July, priced £169, the 300x300dpi newcomer can also produce credit card-size stickers.

Billed as smart, simple and fun, features include

red-eye correction, skin tone optimisation and noise reduction.

Special effects include Sepia, Vivid, Positive Film and Black & White.

The £129 Selphy CP780, which is due in shops now, features a 2.5in monitor and replaces the current Selphy CP760.



ClubNews

AP's weekly round-up of club news from all over Britain

Danson and District Camera Club

Members will hold their third photo exhibition from 2 July-2 August in the Austen Gallery, Hall Place, Bourne Road, Bexley, Kent DA5 1PQ. Entry is free. Club meetings take place on Thursdays at 7.30 at Westbrook School, South Gipsy Road, Welling, Kent DA16 1JB. For details visit www.ddacc.org.uk.

Blandford Forum Camera Club

The club plans to stage its 53rd annual exhibition of members' work, at the Corn Exchange, Blandford, Dorset on 27 and 28 June. An open section will also showcase work from the surrounding area. For club details visit www.bfclub.co.uk.

Brancaster Camera Club

The club will host its annual print exhibition from 13-15 August at Brancaster Staithe Village Hall, Main Road, Brancaster Staithe, Norfolk PE31 8BP. Doors open 10am-6pm. For details call 01485 210 013.

Send club news to: apevents@ipcmedia.com



DxO upgrade

Image enhancement software maker DxO Labs has released a version that adds support for seven of the latest cameras, including the Canon EOS 500D and Nikon D5000. DxO Optics Pro version 5.3.4 is also compatible with the Pentax K-m, Pentax K200, Sony Alpha 200, Sony Alpha 300 and Fujifilm S1000FS. Customers who bought DxO Optics Pro after 1 August 2007 can upgrade to version 5.3.4 for free. Visit www.dxomark.com.

Jacobs courses

High-street retailer Jacobs is to host a series of photo courses at its store in New Oxford Street, London. The courses will be run by photographer Chris Coe. The first is a two-day digital imaging course called Shoot, Edit, Print, on 10-11 July. It costs £325. For details and to book call 01728 669 185, email courses@photoiconic.com or visit www.photoiconic.com.

Tornado photo bid

An amateur photographer was left unconscious after trying to get pictures of a tornado in the US. David Morgan was left with multiple injuries after the twister threw him on to rocks, according to press reports in Colorado.

Man jailed over scuba-diver death

A MAN has been sentenced over the death of his wife whose motionless body was revealed in a photograph taken by a tourist during a scuba-diving trip.

David Gabriel Watson, 32, from the US, was sentenced to four-and-a-half years in jail. Watson had denied drowning his 26-year-old wife, Christira, during a scuba-diving trip to Australia that the couple took ten days after they got married in October 2003 (See AP News 15 December 2007).

He has since pleaded guilty to manslaughter, having



returned to Australia voluntarily.

As we reported in 2007, detectives pored over a photograph captured by a tourist.

When developed, the image revealed the woman's motionless body, lying on the sea bed in the background of the picture (see above).

Europe to review terror laws

THE Council of Europe has pledged to review anti-terrorism laws following media concerns that the laws are, in some cases, 'too broad and fail to define clear limits.'

The council, which seeks to ensure that European countries abide by the European Convention on Human Rights, adopted the plan at a conference held in Reykjavik, Iceland.

Council of Europe ministers said they have resolved to review national anti-terrorism laws 'to ensure that

any impact on freedom of expression and information is consistent with the Council of Europe standards.'

In a statement the council added: 'They [the ministers], also underlined that concerns have been raised that, in some cases, anti-terrorist laws restricting freedom of expression and information in members states are "too broad, fail to define clear limits to authorities' interference or lack sufficient procedural guarantees to prevent abuse".'

Amateur Photographer

This week in...

1911

Never before had an event had so much photographic attention paid to it, declared AP's issue dated 26 June 1911. The occasion was the coronation of King George V. Pictures of the festivities demonstrated the growing role of the camera in recording important events, for viewing by the masses via illustrated newspapers. 'Photographers in all parts of the country will have snapped thousands of shutters and poured hundreds of gallons of developer over miles of films and acres of plates,' reported AP's 'Topics of the Week' section. The journal added: 'What would not the historian of today give for a photographic or cinematographic record of the coronations of monarchs previous to the Victorian era? The progress of photography is helping to make the task of the future chronicler of the Edwardian and Georgian reigns an easy one.'



Photo competition

POSTCARDS FROM THE PARK

With summer days and longer evenings now in full swing, this is the perfect time to get out and enjoy your favourite park. Why not grab your camera and snap a winning picture while you are there?

Now in its third year, 'Postcards from the Park' is a UK-wide competition, organised by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and Big Lottery Fund (BIG) in partnership with parks charity GreenSpace. This is the chance to capture what you love most about parks in an imaginative and eye-catching photograph. Special categories include people at play, wildlife and heritage.

There's £1,000 in Jessops vouchers up for grabs for the overall winner, plus all regional and country finalists and category winners will have their photographs professionally exhibited in London's Southwark Park Cafe Gallery. They will also have their images turned into postcards to be distributed at Lottery-funded venues across the UK. The winners will be invited to a special event in London on 4 September and the exhibition will be open to the public during the first week of September.

Absolutely anyone can take part – so just log onto

www.postcardsfromthepark.org.uk to enter, as well as to find tips on how to capture that perfect photo. The closing date is **3 August 2009** – so get snapping!

JUDGES

Celebrated photographer Mike McCartney will be judging the 'Postcards from the Park 2009' competition along with Tim Kerr, Director of Operations, PA Photocall and Angela Nicholson Technical Editor at *Amateur Photographer* magazine.

LOTTERY INVESTMENT IN PARKS

HLF has already awarded more than £500m to over 500 public parks and BIG has invested upwards of £700m in environmental projects. Both Good Cause distributors continue to spend Lottery players' money on regenerating and improving people's enjoyment of parks, putting them firmly back at the heart of community life.

CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE TO PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE UK

This year marks The National Lottery's 15th Anniversary. Since 1994 more than £23 billion – that's £25 million each week – has been raised by Lottery players for the arts, sport, heritage, environment, education, health, charity and voluntary sectors.

THE COMPETITION

Most parks have plenty to offer the photographer with lots of fun and games for action lovers, stunning floral displays which attract masses of insects and, in some cases, historic buildings and garden ornaments. Whatever you decide to shoot, get in close for impact and try to find an unusual angle to give your images the edge. You can only enter once, but you can submit up to five photographs.

This year the competition has three special categories, people at play, wildlife and heritage.

Simply log onto www.postcardsfromthepark.org.uk to enter online (maximum image size 2MB please). If you prefer, you can submit prints (no larger than 7x5in) with the application form from our website to 'Postcards from the Park', GreenSpace, Caversham Court, Church Road, Reading RG4 7AD.

www.postcardsfromthepark.org.uk

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have your photo exhibited
and then turned into
a postcard

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DATE**
3 August
2009



**BIG
LOTTERY
FUND**

GreenSpace



Review

Your guide to the latest photography books, exhibitions and websites



Book review

Edvard Koinberg: Herbarium Amoris

Floral Romance

Photographs by Edvard Koinberg

Taschen, hardback, 280 pages

£24.99, ISBN 978-3-8365-1450-7

It's not often you come across a 280-page book solely about flowers, let alone one that tracks their sexuality. Inspired by the 18th century botanist Carl Linnaeus's taxonomical studies of plants' sexual organs, fellow Swede Edvard Koinberg attempted a visual counterpart to Linnaeus's work. At home, he cultivated hundreds of flowers, which he then photographed over the course of their life cycle in his home studio. Using a simple black background, Koinberg got in close and used strong directional light to emphasise the form and shape of his flowers, in particular their sexual organs.

I was sceptical of this book at first, but it's one that grows on you. Koinberg's use of almost-isolated light and pitch-black backgrounds really works to draw your attention to the form of the flower. At the same time, the effect lends a sort of cold and clinical feel to each specimen, which may be what Koinberg intended, but at times I found it distracting. Overall, however, this is an interesting study and a possible inspiration for all you macro flower photographers out there. Turn to page 32 to see the results of our APOY Plant Life round.

Jeff Meyer





© PETER HUGO

Exhibition Animalism

Until 27 September. National Media Museum, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD1 1NQ. Tel: 0870 701 0200. Website: www.nationalmediamuseum.org.uk. Open Tues-Sun 10am-6pm. Admission free

This mixed media show explores man's relationships with both wild and

domesticated animals in a way that aims to counterbalance the idealised imagery of wildlife we so often see. Using stills and video from 12 quite different artists, we see the bonds we form with creatures from a number of angles – some funny, some horrific, some sad and some disturbing. Dogs feature prominently in print and movies, while hyena, baboons, birds and mountain gorillas also play a part. A stunning display by James Mollison shows in close-up the expressions of

orphaned apes in a grid of massive prints – a sight that's mesmerising. Just as mesmerising but for different reasons is Angela Bartram's video installation. It explores where to draw the line on our humanisation of dogs and the way we often treat them as equals. You might love your dog, but is French-kissing it a step too far? A spell-binding exhibition, with great use of photography.

Damien Demolder



Book review

Understanding Shutter Speed

Action, low-light and creative photography

By Bryan Peterson

Argentum, paperback, 160 pages, £16.99, ISBN 978-1-902538-53-2

In Bryan Peterson's book you get exactly what it says on the cover. Peterson takes you engagingly through ISO speeds, long, fast and moderate exposures and how to deal with noise, white balance and much more in this compact volume. What impressed me about this book, however, were his detailed examples. Peterson is a talented photographer, and to demonstrate his many points he has provided a bold and dramatic image, along with a detailed explanation of what made him notice the subject or scene, how he decided to portray it and how he went about taking it. In some cases he also provides supplementary images showing how he set up his equipment. The more talented a photographer is, the closer he often holds his cards to his chest. Thankfully, Peterson doesn't feel this need for secrecy and has written a very nice guide that should have something of interest for those at all levels.

Jeff Meyer

Website

www.alexanderblackphotography.com

If you've been inspired by the results of APOY Round 4: Plant Life, Alexander Black's flower images should inspire you even more. California-based Alexander specialises in colourful close-ups of all types of flora, and takes his images outside using available light. On the site, streams of images are ordered into five galleries, which include 'Anatomy', 'Abstract' and 'Flora'. The simply designed site doesn't contain reams of text and the images are presented in an uncluttered way. In the 'Roses' section, softly lit, pastel-toned blooms feature, while in the 'Anatomy' portfolio, intensely coloured flower buds leap off the screen. There is also a black & white and sepia-toned portfolio that contains intricately composed, carefully lit blossoms. It's a simple website, but one that works well. With so many websites vying for attention, it is refreshing to find one that isn't overly elaborate but that lets the images speak for themselves.

Gemma Padley



Share your views and opinions with fellow AP readers every week

Letters



Loved the landscapes

I just wanted to write and compliment you on the British Landscapes Special (AP 6 June). I always read the most interesting parts of the magazine when it arrives on Saturday, but sometimes there is some content left over for me to read during the week. This issue was so jam-packed with material that it took me nearly all week to finish it, dipping in a little each day. Every article was fascinating, and I learnt an awful lot from your writers about graduated neutral density filters, local contrast, landscape techniques and much more. I love how you have not abandoned film and darkroom techniques in the headlong rush to digital imaging, and I find the advice given on the letters pages extremely knowledgeable.

I just wanted to show my appreciation. Every week is great, but that particular issue was outstanding.

Dave Walker, Buckinghamshire



Here comes the science bit

Jon Gibbs commented on the small range of aperture settings on his compact digital camera in his letter 'Diminishing returns' in AP 30 May. In Scctty's words, 'You cannae change the laws of physics, Captain'.

Compact digital cameras have very small sensors compared with 35mm film. This means that the focal lengths of their lenses are also much shorter than their equivalent on a 35mm camera. For instance, the lens on Jon's Canon PowerShot A650 IS has an actual focal length of 7.4–44.4mm, which gives an equivalent 35mm focal length range of 35–210mm.

Now, the f-number is the aperture of the lens in millimetres divided by the focal length in millimetres. This means that, for any given f-number, the actual aperture is a fraction of the size of the aperture of a 35mm lens needed to give the same field of view. However, diffraction (an effect that reduces image quality) depends on the size of the aperture in millimetres, not the f-number. If Jon's compact camera has an aperture of f/22, the actual aperture would be tiny (just 0.33mm at the wide end) and diffraction would reduce the image quality to an unacceptable level. To avoid this, the camera designers limit the minimum aperture to one where diffraction effects do not spoil the image. (This effect is why a typical 35mm standard lens has a minimum aperture of f/22, whereas Ansel Adams and Edward Weston and so on could use f/64 on their large-format cameras).



NIGEL BIRCH

Rutland and proud

I too read with amusement that Rutland Water had magically moved to Warwickshire in the article by Paul Hobson about ospreys in AP 30 May. The map showed the correct position of Rutland Water, so I dismissed the text as a mistake. However, I did take exception to Michael Earp's comment in *Letters* (AP 13 June). I thank him for pointing out the mistake, but object to his comment that 'if you fail to recognise Rutland as a county, then Leicestershire will do'.

Leicestershire will *not* do. Rutland was an independent county until

1 April 1974 when it was subsumed into Leicestershire. In 1994, the Local Government Commission for England recommended that Rutland become a Unitary Authority, and on 1 April 1997 that came into effect. If Unitary Authorities are not recognised as counties, then the likes of the Isle of Wight, Cornwall, Wiltshire, Shropshire, Co Durham and Northumberland can no longer be considered counties. In 2008, Royal Mail had to go against its own code of practice and recognise Rutland as a postal county once more. Rutland is, most definitely, a county.

Fran Harwood-Whitcher, Rutland



Letter of the week

wins a 20-roll pack of 36-exposure Fujifilm Superia ISO 200 print film or a Fujifilm 2GB media card (in a choice of CompactFlash, SD, xD or Memory Stick)*. The sender of every letter published receives a free roll of Fujifilm Superia ISO 200 36-exposure film worth £4.99

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* Please indicate whether you would like to receive Fujifilm film or a memory card (please state type preferred) and include your full postal address

AP reader **David Pearce** argues that film offers the most affordable route into photography

While the minimum aperture on compact cameras has widened from f/22 to f/8, there has been a benefit at the other end of the aperture range: remember the f/13 and similar maximum apertures available at the telephoto end of the zoom range on 35mm compacts just a few years ago? **Jeremy Double, West Yorkshire**

PC whoops!

PC World's current radio ad for digital photography (as heard on Classic FM) features the sound of a film camera motorwind. Should they be told? **Douglas Thomson, Edinburgh**

Wonderful, isn't it? I enjoyed that myself – Damien Demolder, Editor

No birds were harmed...

I was appalled to read about the selfish and uncaring photographer disturbing the dippers in Bradford Dale and potentially spoiling it for everyone else (*Letters*, AP 6 and 13 June). It is one of my favourite walks and I have taken a number of photographs of the dippers from the public footpath. They may not be the greatest photographs, but no birds were harmed in the process! Whoever the rogue photographer was, he clearly has no sympathy for wildlife. He is no better than an egg collector or the type of twitcher who will race to the end of the country just to see a rare bird that has been blown off course (and which usually ends up terrified and often doesn't survive the ordeal). True wildlife enthusiasts would rather miss a photo opportunity than cause any intrusion.

However, it is a public right of way and it hardly seems fair to ban photographers as the path is used by families and people with dogs who are more likely to create a disturbance than any sensible photographer. I hope the response is not too draconian and is limited to signs about keeping to the footpath and some surveillance to spot anyone abusing the rules. **Roger Jackson, Gtr Manchester**

What disease?

So there is 'a disease... sweeping the rivers throughout the UK [that] can be transferred to a clean river environment by using waders that have also been used in an infected river'. So says Alex Birch (*Letters*, AP 13 June), yet he neglects to tell us what this disease is – and he expects us to take his advice about how to photograph wildlife?

Martin Topping, Worcestershire

Photography = art

In reference to Ron Jenkins (*Letters*, AP 6 June), is photography not supposed to be art? The beauty of it is that things don't have to remain natural looking. To say that such pictures should be excluded from the magazine is disillusioned. A lot of people enjoy using HDR techniques and some people spend hours in Photoshop touching up portraits, changing contrast and so on. Should all these pictures be excluded as well? Man Ray was a great artist and experimenter, and his work is taught in photography classes up and down the country. I say more of these articles and keep up the good work, AP. **John Harrison, Lancashire**

Compacts championed

In *Gallery* AP 6 June you featured some shots by Martin Ferry of bluebells at Dockey Wood in Hertfordshire. I also visited this area in the spring with my clapped-out SLR, a bag of Fujichrome Provia and a Panasonic Lumix DMC-LX3 digital compact as back up. I must admit I thought Martin's shots looked a little flat, even though they were taken with almost £3,000 worth of kit (a Canon EOS 5D Mark II and 28-300mm lens).

So this got me thinking... how about a compact camera vs DSLR challenge? I am fed up with the stupidly high prices of DSLRs and associated kit, and I think my humble LX3 (£329) is great fun and can hold its own against anyone with 'all the gear and no idea.' I've included a picture I took with it. **Leighton Price, London W13**



In his letter in AP 4 April, D Pilkington draws our attention to the ever-increasing cost of digital materials and asks how many of us now on low incomes can afford to continue with our photography. Young photographers should not be forgotten.

The young person starting in photography is faced with a bewildering array of equipment, all of it expensive. Before the digital revolution all that was needed was a fairly inexpensive camera and a simple enlarger with very few extras. Now the purchase of a camera, probably an SLR, is just the start. Having spent several hundred pounds on the camera it is then necessary to buy a memory card and a spare battery.

Consider the outlay on a printer. The cheapest A3 printer will cost around £300. The price of inks comes as a further shock. They can cost in the region of £1,000 per litre and our budding photographer may decide that photography is not a viable proposition. It is all very well explaining that the manufacturer offsets some of the cost of the printer against the cost of the inks, but this argument may carry little weight when faced with a bill of more than £100 for a replacement set of inks.

The total cost of equipment for the young person entirely new to digital photography could approach £2,000

Next we come to a computer and software. It may be that there is already a PC in the household, but has it enough memory or a large enough screen? Most photographers will rely upon Photoshop to manipulate their images. Another £500 will be needed for this software.

The list could be extended to storage devices and so on, but even with the minimum requirements a conservative guess at the total equipment cost for the young person entirely new to digital photography could approach £2,000.

It is essential to encourage new photographers, especially young people. We also need to retain those who are now on low incomes. It is now possible at low cost to buy film equipment that, even a few years ago, would have been considered professional equipment. Darkroom gear is also available cheaply. Even the need for a darkroom is not an insurmountable obstacle – over the years many thousands of photographers have produced top-quality work in the most unlikely darkrooms. If the enthusiasm is there, then obstacles will be overcome. If we can overcome the prejudice against it, then the film route into photography may be the answer for young people and those on low incomes. As a photographer's experience and income increase, then this may be the time to change to digital imaging. The time spent in learning the basics via film photography will not have been wasted.

Your thoughts or views (about 500 words) should be sent to 'Backchat' at the usual AP address (see page 3). A fee of £50 will be paid on publication

Amateur
Photographer
Technique

Photo Insight

DAVID CLAPP
EXPLAINS HOW
A LACK OF
FLOODLIGHTS AT
CAERNARFON
CASTLE ENDED
UP GIVING HIM A
MORE AMBIENT
PICTURE
THAN HE HAD
ANTICIPATED

The AP experts

Each week, one of our team of experts of Steve Bloom, David Clapp and Clive Nichols will reveal the secrets behind one of their great images. This week it's David Clapp

DAVID CLAPP Landscape
Our landscape and travel
expert. Based in glorious
south Devon, David is
represented by seven stock
agencies worldwide



© DAVID CLAPP

IN the three years since I began my serious photographic journey, my travels around the UK with a camera have become the subject of endless planning. I have never constrained myself to becoming a landscape purist, and am just as interested in photographing the historical mark left by man's passage through time. My research uncovered a personal goldmine: Snowdonia. It's hardly untapped, but as magazines and internet forums firmly point their subject matter to a somewhat over-photographed Scotland, then perhaps

it's time to consider Snowdonia as a fresh alternative.

Along with an abundance of inland lakes and mountain vistas, there are castles and ruins all along the coast. Not only do these make fabulous subjects in themselves, but they also provide superb alternatives should the mountain weather turn. I am sure that just like me you have smiled as coaches disgorge a horde of point-and-shoot tourists into a car park as you're packing up, thinking, 'Too late; you should have been here two hours ago'. Yet that's precisely it; these

structures are magnetic. Whether you are a tourist, photo tourist or a serious photographer, there is nothing quite like a pilgrimage to a fabulous castle to add something magical to your portfolio, and it doesn't have to be Scotland's Eilean Donan.

This magnificent coastal fortress in Caernarfon conjures romantic and treacherous stories at first glance. Surrounded by everyday modern life, it's easy to misconstrue the importance and sheer dominance a structure like this would have held over the local people. Built by Edward I in 1283 after his conquest of Wales, this mix of traditional and Eastern influence was an example of flamboyance, affluence and power, and was intended as much as anything to be a political statement to the newly subjugated Welsh. There are other fortresses just as photogenic within an hour's drive – Harlech and Conwy Castle, for example – but Caernarfon has a vital ingredient the others do not: reflections.

I was there on Christmas Day. A pre-dawn rise produced slightly windy and dull conditions: great. Forget perfect lakeside reflections, the mountain breezes will scupper any chance of that. Even though grey seemed to be the theme of the day, all was not lost. Caernarfon Castle is a mere 15 minutes up the road from our campsite and it's floodlit. After

coaxing my dearly beloved out of her cocoon by turning on the fan heater, I drove the camper van to the banks of the River Seiont. Typically, all the floodlights except the streetlamps were switched off, but despite this there were some super reflections on the water surrounding the castle.

After swapping my Nikon 14–24mm f/2.8 lens for the Cortax 28mm f/2, this low-light shoot was looking a little unlikely. I set my Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III to 30secs at f/8 and ISO 400, with evaluative metering and a 2sec timer. The result made me go, 'Wow!' The streetlights on my side were adding just enough ambience to illuminate the boats. The castle, slightly more subdued, took on a menacing role as an imposing silhouette. The streetlights to the distant right worked some additional magic, adding a subtle glow to the castle walls. The sky was being taken care of by sodium lighting from the town behind, lending to an overall orchestration of natural and artificial lighting.

As dawn approached the sky grew lighter and, as the magenta hues disappeared, everything lost balance. It was those shots I took some half an hour before dawn that proved the most complimentary. **AP**

To see more pictures by **David Clapp** visit www.davidclapp.co.uk



Talking technique

This is a shot I got the night before when the floodlights were on. It's still a strong picture, but notice how completely different it feels just in this different light. It's more full-on and lacks the subtlety of the other image.

With my dawn shot, you can see that the effect of the streetlamps without the floodlights is much more restrained. It's a little more peaceful and natural, and there are warmer saturated tones in the sky, water and boats. The night shot, on the other hand, is very high in contrast and lacks a lot of the detail that I managed to capture in the larger image to the left.

While low-contrast scenes are great for adding ambience and detail, such scenes can fool your camera when focusing automatically. Your AF is searching for a point of focus to lock on to, but in this low light it can't find one. On these occasions, to ensure you get a sharp picture, switch to manual focus. You might also find that using manual focus gives you greater flexibility in how you can compose your image. Without having to line up focusing points in your frame and pre-focus by pressing the shutter halfway down, you can explore all sorts of angles and perspectives.





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Insider Knowledge



Amateur Photographer's guide to Britain's best photo locations. This week... **The Thames Estuary**

Adrian Campfield



Age 53

Favourite

Location Thames embankment, or any water at dawn

Favourite photographers Bill Brandt, Charlie Waite **Approach** Be open minded when you're at a new location. Take what you see. When you think a scene is nice, take a shot straightaway, then stand back and ask yourself what else you can do with it:

IT'S a resting place for large, unsightly cargo ships queuing for the London Port Authority. Power stations and industrial units line its banks, and you're never too far from one of south-east England's major motorways. It should be anathema to landscape photographers, but the Thames Estuary is a hidden gem of photographic opportunities for the landscape and wildlife photographer, as well as creative photographers of all persuasions.

Adrian Campfield, who lives in Crayford, Kent, regularly explores a

section of the river stretching from Greenhithe in Kent, to Woolwich in south-east London. In particular, he walks a short but remarkable path that cuts through impressive salt marshes around the River Cray at Slade Green before linking up with the Thames at Erith. Adrian seeks out patterns in nature, and one of his favourite themes is the age-old struggle of man versus nature. Amid the industrialisation of north Kent, the Crayford Marshes and Thames Estuary present the perfect canvas for painting with light.



Thames Barrier Sony Alpha 100, 18mm, 35secs at f/22, tripod



Near Woolwich on the banks of the Thames you can get fantastic views of the Thames Barrier with the City of London in the background. I'd been here before and knew that a night shot with all the lights would be quite dramatic, so I returned one July evening at about 10 o'clock. That streak in the centre is a ferry coming through the barrier. As with all night shots, you can't really get an image straight from the camera, so I had to darken the sky a little

in Photoshop. However, I was really happy with the saturation and silky water effect I got from the longer exposure. The ferries are quite frequent in this area, and if you aim to get there about an hour after the sun goes down you'll get this nice glow of twilight and lights from the City of London in the background all reflecting off the water. Again, you might notice that the colours in the long reflections on the water match the tones in the sky. Looking for these links can help bring an image together.

NEED TO KNOW...

How to get there

Train: Rail services leave regularly from London Charing Cross, London Waterloo East, London Bridge and Lewisham rail stations. Be sure to check with station staff, as Southeastern Trains runs several branches of this Dartford/Gravesend/Gillingham line and not all stop at Slade Green. From Slade Green station, turn down Moat Lane just outside the station exit. This leads to the River Cray and becomes the marsh path after about three-quarters of a mile. Adrian says there are lots of photographic opportunities even on this approach down Moat Lane. **Car:** Take the A2 south from London. There is parking at both ends of Slade Green railway station, but on Moat Lane you can park your car off to the side of the path at no cost

The walk

The walk from the Crayford Marshes in Slade Green, travelling along the River Cray to the banks of the Thames in Erith, is 2.5 miles. Adrian says this takes him about three quarters of an hour to walk

Difficulty

It is an easy walk with mostly level ground. The main difficulty, Adrian says, is the lack of places to eat and drink. There's nothing along the walk, and there isn't much at either end in Slade Green or Erith, so Adrian recommends packing a lunch and bringing a bottle of water

DID YOU KNOW...

What is a salt marsh?

A salt marsh is an area of marshy ground that is intermittently inundated with salt water or retains pools or rivulets of salt or brackish water. Salt marshes are one of the most biologically productive habitats on the planet. The daily tidal surges bring in nutrients, which tend to settle in roots of the plants within the salt marsh. The natural chemical activity of salty (or brackish) water and the tendency of algae to bloom in the shallow unshaded water also allow for great biodiversity

Crayford Marshes

Praktica Super TL 1000, 28mm, 1/125sec at f/16, polariser



I took this shot in May at about 5am on the banks of the River Cray just as I entered the Crayford Marshes from Slade Green. I really liked the patterns of the clouds and how they seemed to echo the arrangement of the flowers. I tend to look for subjects that link together or match in some way. I feel it makes a picture work better as a whole and adds extra interest. Initially I tried framing this from the path, but I realised it would look better from a lower perspective. I make a habit of going down to the riverbank to take most of my pictures. It's only a 10ft drop, and at water level you get more even light. The image just looks cleaner. This is one of my older pictures, which I took on a Praktica Super TL 1000 manual camera. I used a polariser to bring out the richness of the colour I was already getting with the early morning light, and that's why this picture has such strong saturation.

Follow the sun

Sony Alpha 100, 25-150mm, 1/320sec at f/32



I love fog, and on this particularly foggy morning I went out to the marshes just before sunrise. I found this scene about ten minutes after sunrise when I was drawn to the light; on the reeds. As I was framing, I happened to notice another person approaching from the opposite direction. I didn't use any filters for this. If you stop your lens down to f/32 you can get a starburst effect that gives your images this sort of glow. On this morning, the fog diffused the starburst and the result is this orange circle. The darker the image, the stronger the orange. Later, I cropped the picture to a square, which I feel accentuates the subject. If this were an oblong landscape you would lose the emphasis on the person. By cropping it square, it suggests that he's following the sun.

Insider knowledge
The world's largest wind farm, the London Array, is due to be built in the outer estuary

Erith pier

Sony Alpha 100, 18mm, 1/250sec at f/22, ISO, polariser



This is a large jetty at Erith, which used to be where boats came in to be dismantled, but it's now owned by and home to a Morrisons supermarket. It's still a fabulous place to take pictures. The pier is a quarter of a mile long and very impressive in the morning when the tide is out. To the left of my frame there is a square section of the pier with a tower, but I didn't want to include that. It would have made the picture feel off-centre to show that much of the pier. The Rule of Thirds may be traditional, but it always works. As there were no other dominating colours, I decided that to keep it from looking flat I needed to saturate the blues. It was the main element here, so I put on a polariser to help bring it out. Later I boosted the contrast to bring out the tones and highlights. I shot at a wider focal length because I didn't feel I needed detail. The pier was a secondary object in my frame and didn't need strong focus. The sky and reflections in the incoming tide were the focal points.

Wildlife

Sony Alpha 100, 18mm, 1/250sec at f/32



There are all sorts of waterfowl along the River Cray, and because this stretch of marshland doesn't get much wind, the water is often very still, which is good for reflections. The water acts as a mirror probably nine out of ten times I visit this spot, and the stillness of the water is what draws me back to this scene. It's the stillness that gives this image a sense of tranquillity. In the winter, the sun rises just within the gap in the background where the river bends. I'd noticed this before, so I waited here one January morning hoping for a nice reflection of the sun in the water. As I was setting my exposure, a swan glided into view. There are always swans floating around in this stretch of the river, so I waited for it to go between the reeds before I pressed the shutter. It adds an extra element to the picture. The landscape and wildlife here are quite varied, and in other areas of the marsh you can even find wild horses.

Mist

Praktica Super TL 1000, 28mm, 1/100sec at f/16, Ilford Delta 100



This is a police walkway on the banks of the Thames at Erith, and one morning these sailors were going out to the barges. The three posts in the water are the markers for the jetty, which sinks at high tide. I liked the way there was a diagonal flow linking the subjects from the lower right corner to the upper left. Even the men are looking in that direction. It gives the image depth. I've toned the image blue to reflect the coldness of that morning and give it a 'mystical, forlorn' feel. I used a slow shutter speed, but it doesn't matter because the mist gives the image a blurry effect. This is one of my favourite spots, as it's a great place to capture images with fog, which I feel gives an image a strong sense of timelessness.

Insider knowledge
The well-preserved wreck of HMS London, which sank in 1665, was discovered last year

Dartford Bridge

Praktica Super TL 1000, 250mm, 1/60sec at f/22



Dartford Bridge, or QE2 Bridge as it's officially known, is one of just two man-made structures on the water that I photograph, the other being the Thames Barrier. To take this, I travelled down to the riverbank at Greenhithe, as I wanted an angle towards London. This was taken at 9.30pm in June on Fujichrome Sensia 100 slide film, and I was hoping for a strong sunset. I was also hoping for light traffic, as I wanted to capture a lone lorry going across. When one finally did, I waited for it to get between the struts. I framed it as a landscape with a plan to crop it as a panoramic. The struts all point to the centre where your eye meets the sun and lorry, and I wanted them framed by the towers. I wanted to capture this symmetry from a distance and emphasise its effect in the panorama.

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F100 body, boxed	EXC++	£399.00
F100 body	EXC	£299.00

F100 body	VG	£199.00
F100 body, boxed	VG	£199.00
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F80 body, black, box	MINT-	£145.00
F80 body, black	MINT-	£139.00
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FA body, chrome	EXC+	£225.00
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FM2n body, chrome	EXC++	£209.00
FM2n body, chrome	EXC+	£195.00
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FM2n body, black	EXC++	£225.00
FE body, chrome, boxed	VG	£125.00
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F2 Photomic body, chrome	VG	£295.00
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F2SB Photomic body, chrome	MINT-	£1795.00
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F2AS Photomic body, chrome	MINT-	£1095.00
F2AS Photomic body, black	EXC+	£399.00
F2A Photomic body, chrome	MINT-	£495.00
Nikkormat FS body, chrome RARE	VG-	£249.00
Nikkor F body, chrome & 5cm f/2 Nikkor-S (Rare German version)	EXC++	£2999.00
F body, black, instruction manual, maker's box	NEW	POA
F body, chrome	EXC	£345.00
F body, chrome, mirror-up version RARE	VG	£875.00
F-36 Motor Drive unit 'F' script & Nippon Kogaku logo	VG	£350.00
MD-2MB-1 Motor Drive Unit for F2 series	MINT-	£325.00
MD-4 Motor Drive for F3 series, Last of the new stock list RRP	£810.00	
	NEW	£450.00
MD-4 Motor Drive for F3 series	MINT-	£225.00
MD-4 Motor Drive for F3	EXC+	£59.00
MD-4 Motor Drive for F3	VG	£39.00
MF-4 (250 back for F3 series) 250 film exposure back	EXC+	£395.00
MD-12 motor drive for FM3A/FM2/FE2/FE/FA, boxed (RRP £439.99)	NEW	£375.00
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Nikon S3 body, black & 5cm f/1.4 Nikkor lens, black, Limited Edition, double boxed, with S3 leather case (RRP £380.00)	NEW	£2700.00
Nikon S body, (8 digit camera), chrome & 5cm f/1.4 Nikkor-S-C instruction manual, warranty card, box	EXC++	£3599.00

AF (AUTOFOCUS) NIKKOR LENSES

14mm f/2.8D AF Nikkor	MINT	£999.00
18mm f/2.8D AF Nikkor	MINT-	£995.00
18mm f/2.8D AF Nikkor, hood, case	EXC+	£825.00
28mm f/2.8D AF Nikkor, boxed	MINT-	£139.00
28mm f/2.8D AF Nikkor	MINT-	£179.00
50mm f/1.8D AF Nikkor, boxed	MINT	£99.00
50mm f/1.8 AF Nikkor	EXC++	£85.00
85mm f/1.4D AF Nikkor, lens hood, boxed	MINT	£825.00
85mm f/1.4D AF Nikkor, lens hood	MINT	£815.00
85mm f/1.4D AF Nikkor, lens hood	MINT	£799.00
85mm f/1.4D AF Nikkor, lens hood	EXC++	£775.00
85mm f/1.4D AF Nikkor	EXC	£749.00
85mm f/1.8D AF Nikkor, lens hood	EXC++	£225.00
105mm f/2.8D AF Micro-Nikkor, boxed	MINT	£495.00
105mm f/2.8D AF Micro-Nikkor, boxed	MINT-	£449.00
105mm f/2.8D AF Micro-Nikkor	EXC++	£435.00
105mm f/2.8D AF Micro-Nikkor	EXC+	£399.00
105mm f/2.8D AF Micro-Nikkor	EXC	£369.00
105mm f/2D AF-DC Nikkor (Defocus Control)	MINT	£725.00
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180mm f/2.8D AF IF-ED Nikkor, hood, case, boxed	MINT	£545.00
180mm f/2.8D AF IF-ED Nikkor	EXC	£445.00
180mm f/2.8D AF IF-ED Nikkor	EXC+	£395.00
200mm f/4D AF IF-ED Micro-Nikkor, lens hood, case MINT	£1150.00	
200mm f/4DG AF IF-ED Micro-Nikkor	EXC++	£995.00
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200mm f/2G AF-S VR IF-ED Nikkor, boxed	NEW	£2895.00
200mm f/2G AF-S VR IF-ED Nikkor, boxed	MINT	£2799.00
300mm f/4D AF IF-ED Nikkor	MINT-	£595.00
400mm f/2.8D AF-S IF-ED II Nikkor, Tropical Grey finish, case, hood	MINT	£4999.00
400mm f/2.8D AF-S IF-ED II Nikkor, case, spare tripod foot	MINT-	£4495.00
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18-135mm f/3.5-5.6G AF-S DX Nikkor, lens hood, case	MINT	£239.00
20-35mm f/2.8D AF Zoom-Nikkor, lens hood	MINT-	£769.00
20-35mm f/2.8D AF Zoom-Nikkor, lens hood, case, boxed EXC++	£745.00	
24-120mm f/3.5-5.6D AF Zoom-Nikkor	EXC++	£199.00
24-120mm f/3.5-5.6G VR AF-S ED Zoom-Nikkor, hood, boxed	MINT-	£445.00
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28-70mm f/2.8D AF-S IF-ED Zoom-Nikkor, hood, case EXC++	£1145.00	
28-70mm f/2.8D AF-S IF-ED Zoom-Nikkor, hood	EXC+	£1095.00
28-70mm f/3.5-5.6D AF Zoom-Nikkor	EXC	£139.00
28-70mm f/3.5-5.6 AF Zoom-Nikkor	EXC	£95.00
55-200mm f/4-5.6G AF-S DX Zoom-Nikkor, hood, boxed	MINT-	£145.00
55-200mm f/4-5.6G AF-S DX Zoom-Nikkor	MINT-	£125.00
55-200mm f/4-5.6G AF-S VR DX Zoom-Nikkor	MINT-	£189.00
70-180mm f/4.5-5.6D AF IF-ED Micro-Nikkor	MINT-	£945.00
70-180mm f/4.5-5.6D AF IF-ED Micro-Nikkor, hood	MINT-	£925.00
70-180mm f/4.5-5.6D AF IF-ED Micro-Nikkor, hood	EXC++	£895.00
70-180mm f/4.5-5.6D AF IF-ED Micro-Nikkor, hood	EXC+	£845.00
70-200mm f/2.8G AF-S VR IF-ED Zoom-Nikkor	EXC	£1225.00
70-210mm f/4-5.6 AF Zoom-Nikkor	EXC++	£125.00
70-300mm f/4-5.6G AF Zoom-Nikkor, hood	MINT-	£149.00
80-200mm f/2.8D AF-S IF-ED Zoom-Nikkor, hood, case EXC++	£1195.00	



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80-200mm f2.8D AF IF-ED Zoom-Nikkor N, hood, case, boxed	EXC++	£615.00
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80-200mm f2.8D AF IF-ED Zoom-Nikkor (push/pull zoom)	EXC+	£495.00
80-200mm f2.8D AF IF-ED Zoom-Nikkor (push/pull zoom)	VG	£445.00
80-400mm f4.5-5.6D VR AF IF-ED Zoom-Nikkor, boxed	MINT	£1049.00
80-400mm f4.5-5.6D VR AF IF-ED Zoom-Nikkor, hood, case	MINT-	£1029.00

MANUAL FOCUS NIKKOR LENSES

7.5mm f5.6 Fish-eye-Nikkor clw 7.5mm finder, pre-AI	VG	£795.00
8mm f2.8 Fisheye-Nikkor AIS, cap, case	MINT-	£3495.00
15mm f3.5 Nikkor AIS, boxed Last of the new stock (RRP £2450.00)	NEW	£1995.00
18mm f3.5 Nikkor AIS, case, lens hood, boxed (RRP £1,550.00)	MINT	£995.00
18mm f3.5 Nikkor AIS	MINT-	£895.00
20mm f2.8 Nikkor AIS, boxed (RRP £1,000.00)	NEW	£799.00
20mm f2.8 Nikkor AIS, boxed	MINT	£599.00
20mm f2.8 Nikkor AIS	MINT-	£495.00
20mm f2.8 Nikkor AIS	EXC+	£445.00
20mm f3.5 Nikkor AIS	MINT-	£289.00
24mm f2 Nikkor AIS, boxed (RRP £990.00)	NEW	£945.00
24mm f2 Nikkor AIS, boxed	MINT-	£599.00
24mm f2 Nikkor AIS, boxed	MINT-	£445.00
24mm f2.8 Nikkor AIS, boxed Last of the new stock (RRP £670.00)	NEW	£595.00
24mm f2.8 Nikkor AIS, boxed	MINT-	£445.00
24mm f2.8 Nikkor AIS	MINT-	£425.00
24mm f2.8 Nikkor-N.C. Auto pre-AI, scalloped focus barrel	EXC++	£225.00
24mm f2.8 Nikkor-N.C. Auto pre-AI, scalloped focus barrel	VG	£75.00
28mm f2 Nikkor AIS, boxed (RRP £920.00)	MINT	£599.00
28mm f2 Nikkor AIS, boxed (RRP £920.00)	MINT-	£549.00
28mm f2 Nikkor AIS	EXC	£379.00
28mm f2 Nikkor AIS	VG	£345.00
28mm f2 Nikkor AI	EXC++	£425.00
28mm f2.8 Nikkor AIS	EXC++	£215.00
28mm f2.8 Nikkor AIS	EXC	£175.00
28mm f3.5 Nikkor AI	EXC+	£119.00
28mm f3.5 Nikkor AI	EXC	£109.00
28mm f3.5 PC-Nikkor (Perspective Contro) (RRP £1,539.00)	NEW	£1195.00
28mm f3.5 PC-Nikkor (Perspective Contro), case	MINT-	£695.00
28mm f3.5 PC-Nikkor (Perspective Contro), case	EXC++	£599.00
28mm f3.5 PC-Nikkor (Perspective Contro), case	EXC	£445.00
28mm f3.5 PC-Nikkor (Perspective Contro) pre-AI	MINT-	£199.00
35mm f1.4 Nikkor AIS, boxed (RRP £1,350.00)	NEW	£999.00
35mm f1.4 Nikkor AIS, boxed	MINT-	£799.00
35mm f1.4 Nikkor AIS	MINT-	£745.00
35mm f1.4 Nikkor AIS, boxed	EXC++	£695.00
35mm f2 Nikkor AIS	MINT-	£445.00
35mm f2 Nikkor AIS	EXC++	£375.00
35mm f2 Nikkor AIS	EXC+	£345.00
35mm f2.8 Nikkor AI	EXC++	£125.00
35mm f2.8 PC-Nikkor (Perspective Contro), last black knob version	EXC++	£449.00
35mm f2.8 PC-Nikkor (Perspective Contro), last black knob version	VG	£349.00
35mm f2.8 PC-Nikkor (Perspective Contro), silver knob version	VG	£265.00
35mm f3.5 PC-Nikkor (Perspective Contro), first version	EXC	£295.00
45mm f2.8P Nikkor, chrome, filter, hood (RRP £440.00)	NEW	£299.00
45mm f2.8P Nikkor, chrome, filter, hood, boxed	MINT	£249.00
45mm f2.8P Nikkor, chrome, filter, hood, boxed	MINT-	£245.00
45mm f2.8 GN Nikkor AI'd	MINT-	£125.00
45mm f2.8 GN Nikkor pre-AI	EXC++	£115.00

50mm f1.2 Nikkor AIS, boxed (RRP £820.00)	MINT	£599.00
50mm f1.2 Nikkor AIS	MINT-	£499.00
50mm f1.2 Nikkor AIS, boxed (RRP £820.00)	MINT	£599.00
50mm f1.2 Nikkor AIS	EXC++	£445.00
50mm f1.4 Nikkor AIS, boxed (RRP £650.00)	NEW	£475.00
50mm f1.4 Nikkor AIS, boxed	MINT	£395.00
50mm f1.4 Nikkor AIS, boxed	MINT-	£299.00
50mm f1.4 Nikkor AIS	EXC++	£199.00
50mm f1.4 Nikkor-S Auto pre-AI, scalloped focus barrel	EXC	£145.00
50mm f1.8 Nikkor AIS, first type	MINT-	£149.00
50mm f1.8 Nikon Series-E AIS	EXC+	£69.00
5cm f2 Nikkor-S Auto, "tick marked", scalloped focusing barrel, pre-AI	MINT-	£995.00
55mm f1.2 Nikkor-SC Auto, pre-AI, scalloped focusing barrel	EXC	£215.00
55mm f1.2 Nikkor-SC Auto, pre-AI, scalloped focusing barrel	VG	£145.00
55mm f2.8 Micro-Nikkor AIS, boxed (RRP £600.00)	NEW	£499.00
55mm f2.8 Micro-Nikkor AIS, boxed	MINT	£399.00
55mm f2.8 Micro-Nikkor AIS, boxed	MINT	£345.00
55mm f2.8 Micro-Nikkor AIS, boxed	MINT-	£299.00
58mm f1.2 Noct-Nikkor AIS	MINT-	£2495.00
85mm f1.4 Nikkor AIS, lens hood, boxed (RRP £1,140.00)	MINT-	£845.00
85mm f1.4 Nikkor AIS, lens hood	MINT-	£775.00
85mm f1.4 Nikkor AIS, lens hood	EXC++	£695.00
85mm f1.8 Nikkor pre-AI	VG	£195.00
85mm f2 Nikkor AIS	MINT-	£375.00
85mm f2 Nikkor AIS	MINT	£249.00
85mm f2.8D PC Micro-Nikkor, case, lens hood, boxed	MINT-	£875.00
85mm f2.8D PC Micro-Nikkor, case, hood	MINT-	£845.00
85mm f2.8D PC Micro-Nikkor	EXC++	£695.00
105mm f1.8 Nikkor AIS (RRP £920.00)	MINT	£749.00
105mm f1.8 Nikkor AIS (RRP £920.00)	MINT-	£719.00
105mm f1.8 Nikkor AIS (RRP £920.00)	EXC++	£675.00
105mm f1.8 Nikkor AIS (RRP £920.00)	EXC+	£649.00
105mm f2.5 Nikkor AIS	EXC++	£275.00
105mm f2.5 Nikkor AI	MINT-	£275.00
105mm f2.8 Micro-Nikkor AIS, boxed (RRP £1,160.00)	NEW	£799.00
105mm f2.8 Micro-Nikkor AIS, boxed (RRP £1,160.00)	NEW	£675.00
105mm f2.8 Micro-Nikkor AIS, boxed (RRP £1,160.00)	MINT-	£575.00
105mm f2.8 Micro-Nikkor AIS, boxed (RRP £1,160.00)	MINT-	£545.00
105mm f2.8 Micro-Nikkor AIS, boxed (RRP £1,160.00)	EXC+	£445.00
135mm f2 Nikkor AIS (RRP £1,219.99)	MINT	£799.00
135mm f2 Nikkor AIS (RRP £1,219.99)	MINT-	£599.00
135mm f2 Nikkor AIS (RRP £1,219.99)	EXC+	£495.00
135mm f2 Nikkor AI	EXC++	£525.00
135mm f2.8 Nikkor AIS	EXC++	£245.00
135mm f2.8 Nikkor AIS	EXC+	£209.00
135mm f2.8 Nikkor AIS	EXC+	£199.00
180mm f2.8 Nikkor AI	MINT-	£399.00
180mm f2.8 Nikkor AI	EXC++	£365.00
180mm f2.8 Nikkor ED AIS (RRP £1,240.00)	MINT	£745.00
180mm f2.8 Nikkor ED AIS (RRP £1,240.00)	EXC+	£625.00
180mm f2.8 Nikkor ED AIS (RRP £1,240.00)	EXC	£425.00
200mm f4 Micro-Nikkor AIS (RRP £1,179.00)	NEW	£895.00
200mm f4 Micro-Nikkor AIS (RRP £1,179.00)	EXC++	£599.00
200mm f4 Nikkor AIS	MINT-	£285.00
200mm f4 Nikkor AIS	EXC+	£175.00
200mm f4 Nikkor AI	EXC++	£125.00
200mm f2 Nikkor ED AI, case	EXC	£1249.00
300mm f4.5 Nikkor IF-ED AIS	MINT-	£595.00
300mm f4.5 Nikkor IF-ED AIS	EXC++	£565.00
300mm f4.5 Nikkor AIS	EXC	£299.00
300mm f4.5 Nikkor AI, case	MINT-	£185.00
300mm f4.5 Nikkor AI	EXC+	£175.00
500mm f8 Reflex-Nikkor, with case, HN-27 hood, 5 filters	EXC+	£475.00
500mm f8 Reflex-Nikkor-C, with case, hood, 5 filters, boxed	MINT-	£495.00
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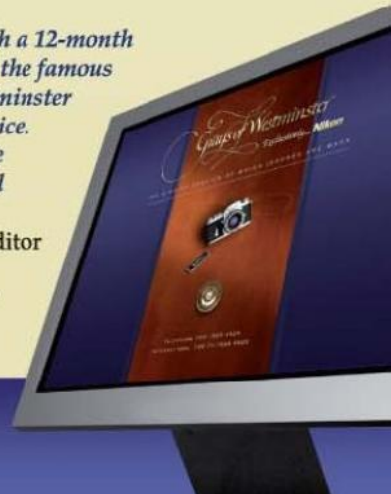


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The composition here is good, with a nice balance of elements, but the sky lets it down. This is a classic issue when shooting a sunset into a largely cloudless sky – high contrast with over-darkening of blues. Some people may not like the fact that the headland is in the centre of the frame rather than on a third, but I do

The perfect landscape

Paul Whiting explains his methodical approach to landscapes, and why it took him more than three years to get the perfect sunset image



WHEN challenged to describe how I would set about capturing the perfect landscape image, my immediate reaction turned towards my long-held belief that I will never take an image that could truly be described as perfect. The wonderful thing about photography is that there is no absolute scale upon which we can measure how good an image is. Those criteria are personal, and can even shift over time as we learn to see in new and different ways.

Many of the photographers I know are never truly satisfied with their images, and are constantly setting themselves new challenges. It is this constant striving for improvement that fuels our passion for image-making. The thrill of success can be short-lived, and to some extent we view ourselves as only as good as our last effort.

However, having said that, I will

now attempt to explain the thought process and techniques behind the capture of what I consider to be one of my best images, and why I feel it works above others. My aim is to show that with some planning, skill and a little luck, we can make a landscape image that will stand the test of time.

Finding the 'perfect' location

The process of creating a striking image begins with finding a location that attracts us in some way. Typically for me, this attraction is based upon impressions from a prior visit, or it may come from seeing an image taken by another photographer. The location of my photograph is Kimmeridge in Dorset. It's somewhere I've got to know well over the years, having first been introduced to it on a workshop, and as it's within an hour's drive of where I live I could visit frequently.

Achieving complete originality

with your image and approach is a great ambition, but don't be afraid to explore a well-photographed area that is accessible to you. Instead, simply resolve to find your own interpretation and avoid looking for other photographers' tripod holes. Although Kimmeridge is becoming a little too well known, there is still a wealth of material with which to make original images. Also, being able to travel there frequently at short notice plays a huge part in being able to get the shot you want.

You must make time to visit your landscape location often and do ample research of the many factors you'll need to consider when preparing to make your image. As Kimmeridge is a coastal location, I needed to research the time of year and time of day for the best lighting conditions, and what features would be revealed, as well as accessibility, at high and low tides. Other things to consider might be how popular the location is with tourists, as not only can it be difficult to keep them out of your frame, but evidence of their presence is difficult to ignore, too.

Once you have completed your

research, you'll find there are further limitations to overcome. In Kimmeridge, for instance, the Dorset coast faces south, so this image can only be made between October and March. This isn't so bad, you might think, until you look at a set of tide tables and see how often a low tide occurs at sunset on a Saturday or Sunday. Suddenly your window of opportunity starts to close. On the relatively few days that meet these criteria I then need a sunset that delivers stunning colours in the sky with virtually no breeze to disturb the reflections on the low-tide beach. Now we're starting to build a picture of how difficult this game is, but as they say, nothing worth having is easy.

As soon as the sun disappeared below the horizon I selected my filter, determining the correct strength to use by checking the histogram. Of course, I could bracket the images and blend them in Photoshop, but I prefer to try to get it right in-camera.

Next, I fine-tuned the composition around my 24mm focal length and ensured that the dark rock ledges formed a

This image has nice light, nice colours and leading lines, but these leading lines take you out to the left of the image too quickly, and to no particular focal point. Although my favourite image also has no big rock feature in the distance, the lines/ledges keep you in the frame and take you to the gorgeous sky

This is a close one and is very nearly there, but for me the boulder is too close to the bottom of the frame and too submerged. I could remove it, but I'll always know that I did when I look at the final image. This was shot late in the session and the tide was creeping back in



frame around the edge of my composition to make it tidier and more balanced. If I zoomed in or out at this point, and left the water on the left edge of the frame, then the image would have taken on a completely different feel. Overall, I find a framed composition like this much more satisfying, as the eye is not led out of the image by light areas of water.

Finally, as the reds, oranges and blues began to form in the sky, I happily shot for 30–40 minutes. In this time I aimed to capture the nuances of changing colour in the sky and water, and experimented with different compositions. I shot

all my images in raw mode at ISO 100, which helps you obtain the highest quality image possible with maximum flexibility at the post-processing stage.

For the compositional reasons I've described, this main picture is the clear winner of the images shown here. It has rich colours in the sky that are reflected in the foreground boulders and ledges. It has nice leading lines and no distracting elements to lead the eye out of the frame. The image with the vivid blue water, for instance, has some beautiful qualities, but the boulder is too close to the bottom of the frame.

Having spent three years chasing

this sort of image at Kimmeridge, how do I satisfy myself that it is 'perfect'? The key test for me is to ask myself this question: 'Could I make a better image in the future at this location given the constraints I face?' For me, the answer is, 'I don't think so'. Mind you, I'll keep on trying.

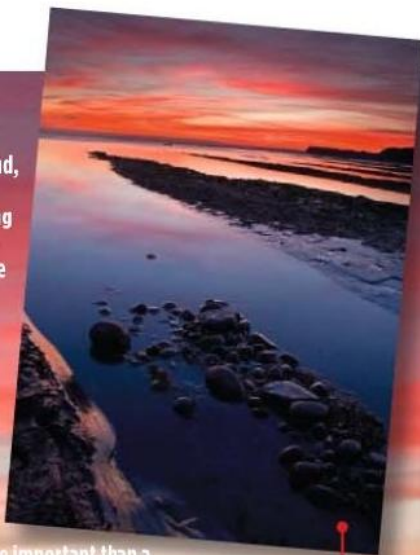
Towards the final image

My journey towards capturing my Kimmeridge sunset picture started at the end of 2004 and only concluded in early 2008. Most of the three years in between was taken up by visiting the location as often as I could to see it in different lighting and tidal conditions, and to

explore as wide an area on foot as possible to determine which sort of compositions might suit the typical conditions I would find.

There's a general hazard I find with shooting at the coast in that the sun often sets into a bank of cloud on the horizon, even if the prevailing conditions are good. This happened a lot on my visits, scuppering those rare weekend opportunities when the weather otherwise appeared to be nice. This is why it took me so long to get my final image. Nevertheless, each of those trips was still part of the important process of getting to know my location intimately and refining my thinking process

This is also very close, with nice colours and shapes in the foreground, but still the question remains over the leading lines taking your eye out of the picture on the left side. Interestingly, when faced with the choice between this image and my favourite, a customer chose this one. This just illustrates that as photographers we often forget that the emotional response to an image can be more important than a formal analysis of why it works compositionally



Amateur Photographer Top tip

Perfect weather, perfect shot

When setting off from 60 miles away you're always going to need a bit of luck, as the weather can be very different when you reach the coast. The other thing I have to factor in is that the prevailing weather fronts are often from the south-west, so if I see any hints that cloud is building up in that direction when I'm at home in Winchester, Hampshire, I know I'm unlikely to get interesting light down there in the west. The ideal conditions I look for are sunshine with clearish skies and no more than high-level thin cloud.

Another trick to make sure you get the right weather conditions is to phone ahead. Try calling a local tourist information centre (Poole, in my case) and ask what the weather is doing and what the sky looks like in the west – they're always very happy to help. You could also call a local pub or B&B if you've made a few contacts. I have done all these things in the past. Some nearby towns may even have a webcam that shows the weather.

Finally, when you do find the perfect weather conditions, make sure you do not pack up until 10–15 minutes after sunset. If the sun is setting behind thin cloud, it still has the potential to light up the sky with lovely colours.

in terms of how to make the best of the prevailing conditions. Most importantly, they were an essential part of the preparation that meant I would have the best chance of success when all the factors out of my control finally came together.

The final image

In spite of the many enjoyable visits I made to this favourite spot of mine, under myriad conditions, I still dreamed of a wideangle landscape view at low tide, with the rock ledges and main headland at Kimmeridge set against a beautiful coloured sky. I'd been waiting three years for the right conditions (see *Top tip*, above),

so when the weather looked good that eventual afternoon, I set off with enough time to arrive at Kimmeridge one hour before the scheduled sunset time. Giving yourself this hour allows you to find and secure your ideal place to begin working. The hard work, though, has already been done. Thanks to your numerous earlier visits, you should generally know where to start.

The first thing I did when I arrived was to use my black cardboard framing device to decide where best to set up. This helps me see the scene as my camera would, and on this day I could see that the low tide would give me the composition I'd

long had in mind. As a bonus, I also found a nice group of wet boulders reflecting the light that would serve well as foreground interest.

I set the camera up on its tripod with a 24–70mm lens and, because the conditions were so good, I set a focal length of 24mm to show off a large amount of land and sky.

I always wait until the sun has dipped below the horizon before making my images, as the sky will usually take on its most vivid colours between 15 and 20 minutes after the sun has set. With the bright sky I had, I'd need a ND grad filter to balance its level of brightness with that of the foreground. If you have

one, you can use the highlight alert facility on the LCD of your camera to check the highlights in the sky have not blown out.

Finally, when using ND grad filters, remember not to overdo the strength. A common mistake is to push the histogram highlights too far back to the left, creating overly dark shadows and midtones in the sky. It might be acceptable for b&w images, but in colour our eyes will immediately recognise the over-darkened sky as unnatural. Your image will accept a slight darkening of the sky in Photoshop much better than it will an attempt to lighten blocked shadows. **AP**

Minimum is maximum

You don't need flamboyant locations with bright colours to take great landscape photographs, says **Charles Twist**, as he explains how you can make great pictures from areas lacking in obvious features



IN the summer months, when our flora is in full bloom, the natural urge is to go hunting for bright images with lots of colour. However, I find myself increasingly drawn to Britain's less flamboyant locations that are practically hiding in plain sight at this time of year.

All around us in Britain are landscapes lacking in features that will surprise you with the interesting pictures that can be built from their stark simplicity. For me, minimalism in photography is far more about the rendition of a subject than the choice of subject per se. It's about paring back the graphical elements until only the essential ones are left.

While travelling with my 5x4in Toyo field camera, I often come upon scenes such as those described above that will hold my attention for reasons that are at times conscious and at other times unconscious. What's interesting about these places is that they are often ignored, for they appear uninviting. Yet the very fact they are plain makes them ideal backdrops: it's then a matter of locating within them a subject that will work graphically against it.

I favour visiting the moors and coastline of North Yorkshire. The beaches are variable, but some are very simple landscapes indeed – the beach in the image on the opposite page is little more than sand. However, the sea coal has been deposited in bands by the gentle action of the waves to form a rhythmic pattern and is a lead-in emphasised by the wideangle lens (equivalent to 20mm on a full-frame DSLR). This texture is then counterbalanced by the random scattering of stones and shells, and finally overrun by the reflections of the evening sky. This combination creates a rich but nevertheless plain foreground that merges with the sky. The main subject of the picture, Hunt Cliff, stands out against



The moors offer a rich variety of form, colour and texture, seen here beneath domineering clouds

Toyo 45A, Nikkor 90mm, Fujichrome Velvia 50

this backdrop with its warm colours.

Meanwhile, the moors are nearly bereft of trees and conceal their richness in the contrast of moss and water, heather and grasses. As they interlock, they form patterns of colours and textures that offset each other. The best options for showing this variety are either to find a mildly sloping terrain where a sequence of vegetation can be photographed, or to look for soil conditions that allow the close proximity of different plants. A longer focal length brings

the best out of the former, while a wideangle is preferable for the latter.

A successful composition will rely on simplicity and clarity. I ask myself what caught my eye and what truly matters: it's a matter of teasing out the fundamental contrast (of form, colour, texture and tone) and elevating that to the role of prime subject, while rejecting anything that would distract the viewer's attention. Effectively, the graphical nature of the scene dictates its representation in the final print and transcends it. **AP**

ALL PICTURES © CHARLES TWIST



**This picture of Saltburn beach is
composed around the simple contrast
of warm and cold hues**
Toyo 45A, Schneider-Kreuznach
75mm, Fujichrome Velvia 50

ICONIC PHOTOGRAPH

Tiananmen Square

Stuart Franklin



Stuart Franklin's photograph of a single unarmed protestor in front of a column of tanks has become a symbol of China's pro-democracy movement and the power of the individual. **David Clark** reports

THE most iconic photographs are the ones that capture a person, place or historical event at a significant moment, and which, over time, develop an enduring power. Some images, such as Stuart Franklin's photograph of a Chinese pro-democracy protestor, capture not only a significant event, but also the spirit of an era.

In 1989, major political changes were taking place in several countries around the world. These resulted in the overthrow of communist governments in Czechoslovakia and Romania, the reunification of Germany and the end of the Cold War. During this period, the Chinese pro-democracy movement attracted international media attention. Could China's seemingly all-powerful ruling elite be toppled?

The movement began as a response to the death of Hu Yaobang, the reforming general secretary of the Communist Party of China, in April 1989. A week after his death, around 100,000 students marched on Beijing's Tiananmen Square. Their initial aim was to

mourn their dead leader, but they soon began demonstrating against the authoritarianism of the Chinese government. The protests continued over the following weeks and included demands for economic reform and freedom of the press.

At the time, Stuart Franklin was a 33-year-old photojournalist. He had worked for the Sygma agency in the early 1980s and had joined Magnum in 1985. In April 1989, Bob Dannin, Magnum's editorial director in New York, asked him to cover the student uprising in Beijing. Franklin was keen to go. 'I had already thought this was an interesting and important story,' he later said, 'because the little I knew about Chinese history at the time taught me that the confronting of authority was as close as you could get to sacrilege in Chinese culture.'

When he arrived in Tiananmen Square, the protests were well under way and students had occupied the whole of the area. He recalled that the demonstrations had a positive atmosphere,





'The Tank Man' stops a
column of T59 tanks
in Tiananmen Square,
Beijing, on 4 June 1989

Students on hunger strike.
Tiananmen Square, Beijing,
26 May 1989



ALL PICTURES © STUART FRANKLIN/MAGNUM PHOTOS

Amateur Photographer ICONS OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Events of 1989

Jan

George Bush [Senior] becomes the 41st President of the United States, succeeding Ronald Reagan

Feb

The Soviet Union withdraws its last troops from Afghanistan after nine years of military operations

Apr

Ninety-six Liverpool supporters die in the Hillsborough Disaster, one of the worst-ever tragedies in European football

June

Death of Iranian religious and political leader Ayatollah Khomeini

Nov

The Berlin Wall is torn down in a symbolic first step towards the reunification of Germany

Nov

Non-violent overthrow of Czechoslovakia's Communist Party, an event later called the Velvet Revolution

Dec

In Romania, Communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu is deposed and executed. Dissident Vaclav Havel is elected president



almost like a rock festival. Franklin mingled with the students, got to know them and photographed them. After a few days, he was put on assignment for *Time* magazine.

Several days after his arrival, though, on the night of June 3, the Chinese army assembled in greater numbers around the square. Loudspeaker messages warned people to disperse, but many stayed. While Franklin was photographing in the square, at around 10pm, violence flared.

'Some intermittent shooting began at the edge of the square, apparently at random,' he later remembered in an interview with author Nigel Warburton. 'I saw someone go down. Then there was complete chaos. Everyone tried to run. It was difficult to tell where the shots were coming from or where to go in the pitch-black darkness. The Chinese army had been ordered to retake the square at any cost.'

Franklin escaped from the melee and returned to his room at the Hotel Beijing, which overlooked the square. He was later joined by photojournalist Charlie Cole, who was covering the story for *Newsweek* and couldn't get back to his hotel. Cole had witnessed tanks advancing on the square, crushing vehicles and an unknown number of protesters. By 5am, the area had been completely cleared.

Franklin and Cole were confined to the hotel the next day, but could see what was happening in the square from their balcony. They watched as a column of T59 tanks moved towards the square. Franklin later recalled, 'I

saw this student emerge and stand in front of a tank. The tank stopped. He climbed up on the tank and talked to the driver in the turret. Then he stood in front of the tank again until three civilians dragged him away, and the tanks carried on.'

Cole believes these civilians were actually secret police, who then probably took the man away and executed him some time later. The man has never been definitively identified and his fate remains uncertain.

Franklin got his films out of China by hiding them in a box of tea and asking a French student to take them to Paris. However, he did not immediately realise the significance of his photographs of the scene.

'Photographically, it didn't seem terribly interesting; the guy was really small,' he said in a recent interview for *The Guardian*. 'It was only after speaking to the Magnum office in Paris a couple of days later that I realised how important it was. They were saying: "This is amazing! You've got the tank man!"'

Franklin was not alone in recording the scene. Two other photojournalists, Jeff Widener of the Associated Press and Charlie Cole, had photographed it from slightly different perspectives, and it had been filmed by CNN and the BBC. Franklin's image captures a wider scene than the other two photographers and includes a burned-out bus in the background. Both Franklin and Cole won World Press Photo awards for their images, while Widener was a nominated finalist

for the 1990 Pulitzer Prize.

Of course, Franklin's picture does not tell the whole story of the Tiananmen Square demonstrations. It doesn't show the bloodshed during the Chinese army's brutal suppression of the protests, which, according to the Chinese Red Cross, left 2,000–3,000 protestors dead. Yet it remains a significant and potent image as it both records a dramatic moment of heroism and symbolises the power of the individual against an oppressive state. **AP**



Books

A selection of Franklin's Tiananmen Square images, and the story behind them, can be found in 'Magnum Stories' (Phaidon, 2004). Franklin's own books include 'The Time of Trees' (2000), 'Sea Fever' (2005) and 'Footprint: Our Landscape in Flux' (2008).

Websites

A wide-ranging selection of Stuart Franklin's work can be found on his website, www.stuartfranklin.com and on www.magnumphotos.com. You can find an interview with Franklin, in which he discusses the Tiananmen Square images, by going to www.nigelwarburton.typepad.com and clicking on the Photographers link.

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1 Gary McGhee Merseyside 42pts

Nikon D200, 90mm macro, 1/13sec at f/5

◆ Gary, 41, who is a chemical worker in the organometallic industry, shoots mostly landscapes and was a bit intimidated by this round, he admits. For this image, Gary placed a tulip in an old milk bottle on a table next to a window. 'I then used a large sheet of black card behind the flower for a clean background,' he says. Gary used only the available window light and later made some Levels and Contrast adjustments on the computer before toning the image and cropping it to a square. **Judges say** Gary has done a tremendous job. Less is more, as they say, and the simplicity of this image is what's most striking – the clean black background and the subtlety of the tones. The quality is amazing



3 Andrew Hipperson London 40pts

Canon EOS 40D, 100mm macro, 1/250sec at f/8, ISO 200

◆ This shot by Andrew, 39, a product manager at a specialist computer board manufacturer, is his first competition entry. 'I shot this moss in my garden handheld,' he says. 'I like to use the Canon macro ring flash (MR-14EX) even if it's bright because it means I can stop down to get a little more depth of field and have a relatively "safe" shutter speed. **Judges say** Wonderful colour and depth of field. If this is Andrew's first competition entry, we expect he'll have more success in the future





2 James Rowland
Kent **41pts**
Nikon D2Xs, 90mm
macro, 1/80sec at f/4, ISO 100

♣ James, a 45-year-old graphic designer, has recently been making flower portraits 'with a twist'. He brought this tulip into his conservatory just after a shower of rain. 'I think the water drops really make the picture,' he says. 'I put a piece of coloured card behind the flower to add colour and remove distraction. Later he added a mask to give it a more textured look. **Judges say** The colour is stunning, and the raindrops add interest to the petals. There are strong fine-art qualities to this very beautiful image.



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APOY 2009

AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR COMPETITION

We saw beautiful blossoms, bold black & white and all varieties of flora in our fourth round of APOY 2009, **Plant Life**

Gary McGhee, of Merseyside, has won first prize in our **Plant Life** round of APOY, winning a Canon EOS 1000D and Canon's EF-S 60mm f/2.8 Macro USM lens, as well as a Canon Speedlite 270EX II flash. The Canon EOS 1000D is a 10.1MP DSLR with 3fps capture capability and Live View, while the EF-S 60mm offers high corner-to-corner resolution and fast AF. The Speedlite 270EX II features a zoom head to ensure efficient light distribution and a bounce flash head to allow for softer tones. In total, Gary has won £1,119.97 worth of Canon kit.

Second prize of a Canon Pixma Pro 9500 Mark II printer, worth £729, goes to **James Rowland**, of Kent. Producing gallery-quality prints at up to A3+ and 14in wide, the Pixma Pro 9500 Mark II offers ten Lucia pigment inks with superb colour control and a wide range of media support.

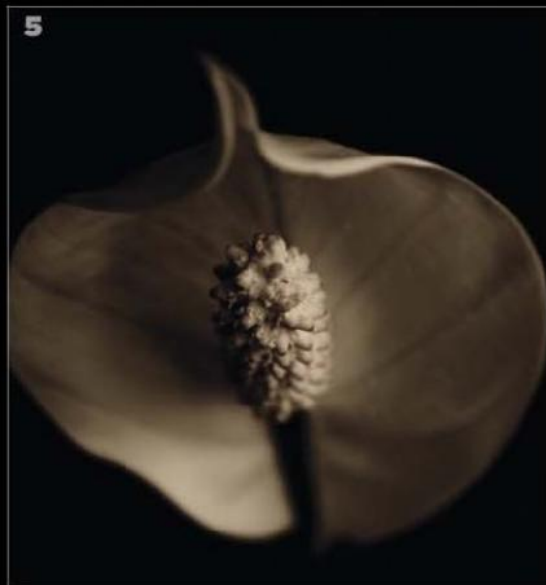
In third place, **Andrew Hipperson**, of London, will receive a Canon CanoScan LiDE 5600F scanner, worth £149. The professional-quality CanoScan boasts a 35mm film/slide holder and exceptional 9600x4800dpi resolution. The scanner also offers 11sec, 300dpi scans, with zero warm-up time for instant operation.

The leader board

The leader board has seen some dramatic moves this round. A few familiar names have shifted around, while others have dropped out of the top ten. Our judges were met with a staggering array of images to choose from – many colourful and bright, while others used strong black & white tones to emphasise texture and shape. It was one of our most impressive collections yet.

Moving straight to the top spot this month with yet another top 30 shortlist is former Amateur Photographer of the Year **Mani Puthuran**. Hot on his heels is **Kathy Wright**, who notched a top 50 placing this month to add to her points total. **Pengfei Tian** and **Barry Harrington**, meanwhile, stay in the top four where they've been all year. Making their first appearances in the top ten this year are **Adrian Hall**, **Patrick Dodds** and this month's winner **Gary McGhee**. Be sure to catch the results of Round 5, **H.O.** in AP 25 July, and our announcement of Round 6 in AP 4 July.

1	Mani Puthuran	117pts	5	Gary McGhee	76pts
2	Kathy Wright	105pts	7	Lee Jeffries	75pts
3	Barry Harrington	99pts	8	Adrian Hall	73pts
4	Pengfei Tian	91pts	9	Chris Nagle	69pts
5	Patrick Dodds	76pts	10	Gary Telford	68pts



4 Adrian Hall Surrey **39pts**

Canon EOS 400D, 10-22mm

Tree roots *Judges say* Stunning light and amazing depth. It's hard not to get lost in this picture

5 Laszlo Forras London **38pts**

Canon EOS 30D, 17-50mm, 1/50sec at f/5.6, ISO 100

White spathiphyllum *Judges* Laszlo used only natural light and a black background to create this timeless image

6 Patrick Dodds Surrey **37pts**

Nikon D50, 55-200mm, 1/400sec at f/5.6, ISO 400

Lily at Torosay Castle *Judges say* Patrick underexposed to get a pitch-black background, adding ambience to his image

7 Marc Baker Surrey **37pts**

Nikon D70s, 50mm macro, 1/320sec at f/4.5, ISO 250

Stamens *Judges say* Beautiful, subtle colour and tones, and we love the isolated focus in the middle ground

8 Ben Pike Bedfordshire **37pts**

Canon EOS 400D, 200mm + extension tubes, 1/400sec at f/8

Poppy emerging *Judges say* We love the subtle tones and the texture Ben has managed to capture

9 Islwyn Bithell Powys **36pts**

Sony Alpha 700, 17-35mm, 1/80sec at f/4.5

'Double amaryllis' *Judges say* This image has excellent contrast, and we like the centre positioning of the flower within the frame

10 Mani Puthuran N Humberside **35pts**

6x7, 70-200mm, Fujichrome Provia

'Last leaf of autumn' *Judges say* Great light and perspective. We like how the leaf appears to glow



11 Bala Baskar Norfolk **34pts**

Olympus Camedia C-770, 1/100sec at f/3.5

'Backlit young leaves' **Judges say** The light and contrast are breathtaking. Bala has done well to convert this image to black & white

12 David Meredith Warwickshire **34pts**

Sony Alpha 700, 105mm macro, 1/15sec at f/11 ISO 200

Dandelion head **Judges say** The sharpness in David's image is outstanding. He's captured such fine detail that we can see patterns and symmetry in the seeds

13 Henrique Soto Lisbon, Portugal **34pts**

Nikon D300, 60mm, f/22

'Detail of a rubus leaf' **Judges say** Henrique's well-positioned lighting has revealed in stunning form the complicated structure of this leaf. Great composition

14 Alan Johnson Northumberland **33pts**

Pentax K10D, Pentax 50mm f/1.7 and Helios 44-f/2 lenses

'Unknown flower' **Judges say** Alan showed great skill by using the Pentax lens mounted on the camera and the Helios reversed and handheld in front of it. With both lenses at maximum aperture, he rocked back and forth to achieve focus

15 Roger Dewsbery Suffolk **33pts**

Canon EOS 3, 100mm, Fujichrome Velvia 50

'Peas in the pod on a light box' **Judges say** Great colour and contrast between the crisp, defined outlines of the pods and the softer shapes of the peas within them.





16 Sarah Perring Devon **33pts**
Canon EOS 350D, 75-300mm
Flowers in frost **Judges say** Sarah changed her white balance setting to tungsten to make her picture feel colder

17 Gabor Pozsgai Aberdeenshire **32pts**
Canon EOS 350D, 180mm macro, 1/40sec at f/3.5, ISO 100
Tulip **Judges say** Gabor used a flash in front and one behind the flower through a white sheet to get this stunning light

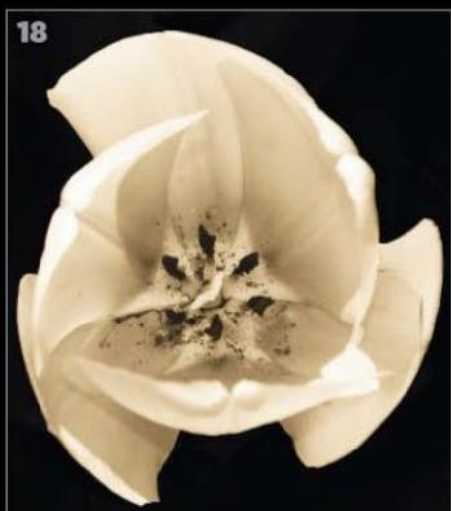
18 Paul David Greater London **32pts**
Sony Alpha 100, 18-70mm, 1/125sec at f/8, ISO 100
'A single flower' **Judges say** Paul has shown a keen eye for composition with this unusual perspective. Very nice

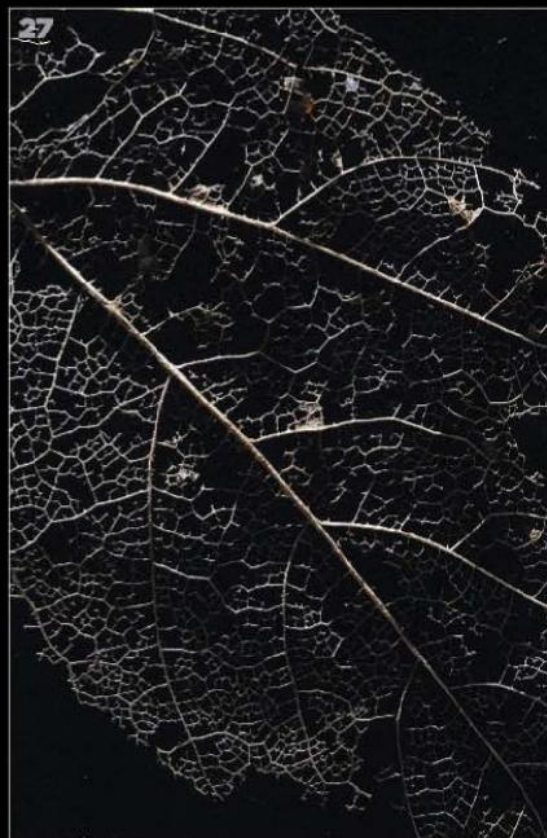
19 Peter Warrington Oxfordshire **32pts**
Olympus E-3, 50mm macro, 1/60sec at f/3.2
'Frost-tinged ivy leaves' **Judges say** Beautiful saturation, wonderfully framed and very well spotted

20 Phil Hargreaves Lancashire **32pts**
Canon EOS 40D, 100mm macro, 1/200sec at f/2.8, ISO 800
Close-up of dried carnation **Judges say** Stunning colour. Phil has created a beautiful image with abstract qualities

21 Val Maillard Glamorgan **32pts**
Sony Alpha 700, 18-70mm, 1/10sec at f/10, ISO 800
Peace lily **Judges say** We like how Val tried something different, emphasising the simplicity of the broad leaf

22 Peter Holloway Merseyside **32pts**
Olympus E-400, 17-45mm, 1/200sec at f/9
Marram Grass, Ainsdale Beach **Judges say** Peter's shot is full of atmosphere and makes you feel as if you're there





23 Andrew Lever Dorset **31pts**
Mamiya 645 Pro 1L, 150mm with close-up filter
'Dandelion and falling seed' **Judges say** We love the glow of medium format, and Andrew's sepia tone brings this out

24 Chris Ould Dorset **31pts**
Nikon D200, 24-120mm, 1/30sec at f/6.3, ISO 400
Oak and Japanese maple leaves **Judges say** Great colour and saturation brought out by Chris's longer exposure

25 Hariprasath Raajaraajan Bristol **31pts**
Nikon D40x, 18-55mm, 1/1250sec at f/5.6, ISO 200
'A taraxacum (dandelion) life cycle' **Judges say** Very well seen and executed. The exposure is perfect

26 Martyn Ferry Oxfordshire **31pts**
Olympus E-400, 14-42mm, 0.6sec at f/22, ISO 100
'Snowhill Lavender Farm' **Judges say** Stunning colour and motion, with bags of atmosphere. We also like the symmetry

27 Matthew Hunt Surrey **31pts**
Nikon D300, 150mm, Nikon SB-26 flash, PC sync cable
'Skeleton of leaf' **Judges say** With the flash a metre away, Matthew placed the lead on black card, with white card on the opposite side to bounce light back. Very striking image

28 Carl Franklin Tyne & Wear **30pts**
Canon EOS 5D, 180mm macro, 1/15 sec at f/4
'Scarlet kunzea, taken at Oxon Hoath' **Judges say** Lovely soft colour and plenty of interesting shapes. Very nice

29 John Webb Somerset **30pts**
Ricoh GX200, 5.1mm, 1/60sec at f/2.5, ISO 100
'Cuckoo Pint' **Judges say** John noticed how the flower resembled a candle flame, so he converted it to greyscale and gave it a red tone and a vintage feel

30 Steve Fitton Lancashire **30pts**
Canon EOS D60, 100mm macro, 1/20sec at f/6.7, ISO 100
Grape hyacinth (muscarl) **Judges say** Beautiful rich colour and depth. Steve has chosen an interesting perspective

How to submit your pictures

Send up to six prints, slides or images on CD (please include the original files from the camera along with your submitted versions on your CD). Tell us a little about the pictures and, if you can, include details of equipment used and exposure settings.

Send your photographs to 'Appraisal' at our usual address (see page 3). Please enclose an SAE if you would like them returned.

Expert advice, help and tips from AP Editor Damien Demolder

Fox Simon Berry

Nikon D300, 200mm,
1/180sec at f/5.6, ISO 200

Simon says he came across this scene purely by chance and he wanted to hit the shutter at the moment the fox looked up. And he did just that as the fox is looking straight at the lens. Simon also says he made adjustments in Levels and cropped the image post-capture.

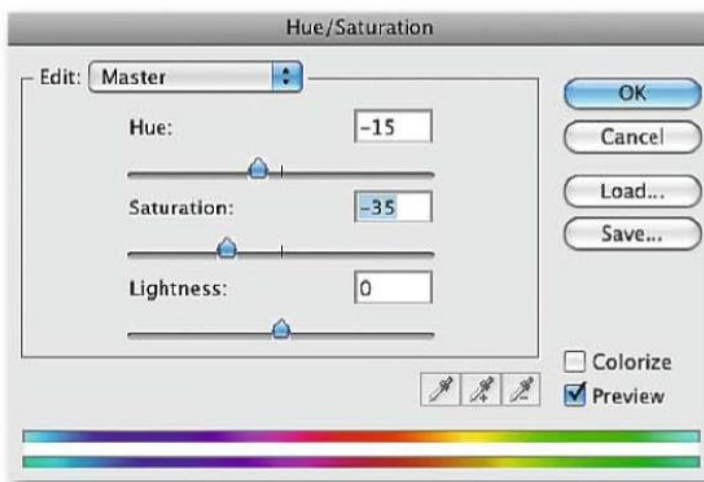
My first impression on looking at the picture is that Simon didn't have a long enough lens to get in close to the fox's head. That is what we are usually advised, to zoom right in and fill the frame with the subject so everybody knows exactly what they're supposed to be looking at. Yet because the background is completely plain with only grass visible, what we are presented with is a great big green blanket, in which the orange fox



really stands out. So, whether Simon has realised it or not, he has made a feature of this fact – a plain green canvas with a splash of orange colour – and this is what makes the picture, along with the fox's position as it looks

directly at the camera. It doesn't matter that the subject is small.

Unfortunately, Simon seems to have zoomed in quite a lot, because the picture isn't especially sharp. He says he used a 200mm lens on a Nikon D300, which means he had an effective focal length of 300mm. His stated shutter speed of 1/80sec would not have been fast enough to eliminate camera shake completely. Also, by adjusting the Levels, Simon has racked up the Saturation, but hasn't corrected the cyan cast. Because the white balance is slightly cool anyway, increasing the Saturation has overemphasised the fact that the colours aren't quite right. I have taken the saturation down a bit and added a small amount of red and yellow to make the picture a little bit more realistic, without losing the sense of a big green picture with a splash of orange. It's a great shot, though, and Simon should be very pleased with it.



See your pictures in print

Damien's Picture of the Week wins 6x Fujifilm Sensia 100, 3x Fujifilm Superia 400, 3x Fujifilm Provia 100 or a Fujifilm 2GB media card (in a choice of CF, SD, xD or Memory Stick). The two runners-up win 3x Fujifilm Sensia 100. Please indicate in your letter if you would like Fujifilm film or a memory card (and type) and include your postal address and image details.



Amateur Photographer
Picture of the week

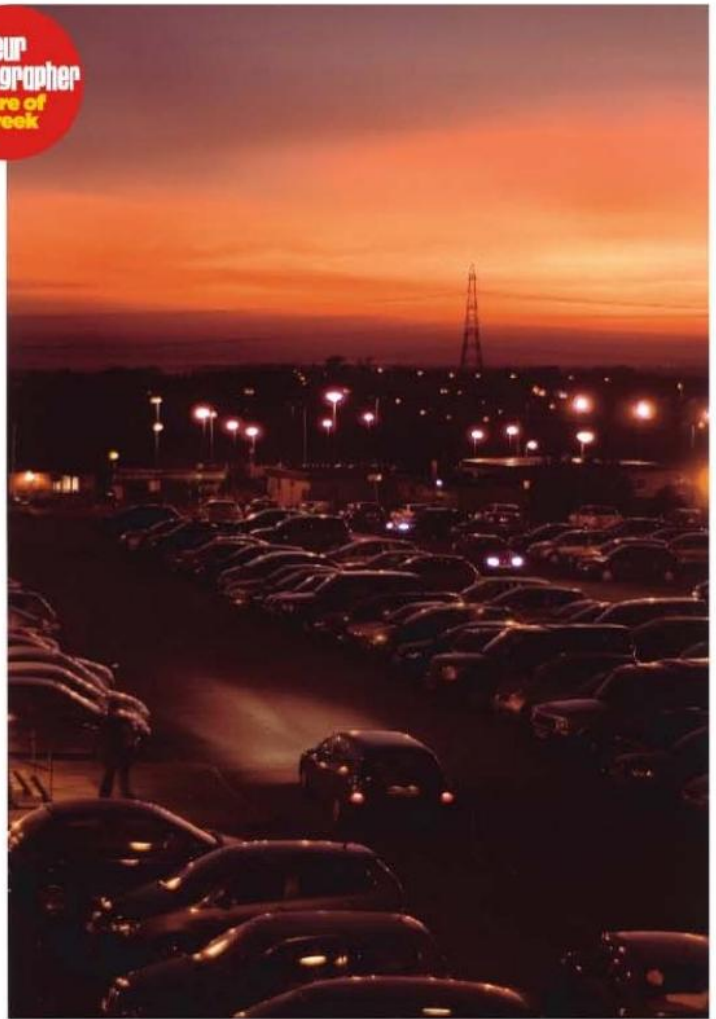
Going home Jason Walker

Nikon D50, 50mm, 1/30sec at f/1.8

Jason sent in a picture he calls 'Going Home', which was taken just after the sun has left the sky, during that magic time when the world is lighting up artificially with headlights, street lights and lights from buildings but the sun is still shining on the clouds. It's a famous time for photographers, commonly called 'crossover light time', and Jason has made very good use of it here. Without the light in the sky it wouldn't be half as good, just as it wouldn't if there were light in the sky but none in the foreground. However, because we have light in the sky and light in the foreground, the picture has a lot of impact. I love the different colours and that slightly misty feel of what is probably an autumnal evening.

The composition is also something I like, with the road leading out of the frame, highlighted by the car that's travelling along it, which really helps

to make it into a bit of a feature. The position of the car complements the position of the electricity pylon on the horizon, and the guy with the rucksack walking in the bottom left-hand side of the frame is great. Plus, the nice mixture of the powerful orange and peach colours of the natural light in the sky, and the greens, yellows and sodium orange of the car park and car lighting, make for a really atmospheric shot. It's difficult to say what this picture is of really, except 'going home'. It really does conjure up the atmosphere of that time of year when you get up in the dark and go home in the dark. Rather than it being the spring time when you're feeling positive, this is decidedly autumnal where the only thing ahead of you is the winter. I think Jason has captured it perfectly, and that's why it's my picture of the week.



Ring-tailed lemurs Ruth Jennings

Canon Epoca, 35-105mm, Boots slide film, ISO 200



Despite the so-called digital revolution we still receive lots of slides and pictures that people have taken on print film. Ruth has sent in a fantastic slide of three ring-tailed lemurs on a rope, so it's obviously been shot at a safari park or a zoo. What's brilliant is that she's used a Canon Epoca, which

is a brilliant camera. They're big, ugly things with a flip-out lens flash built into the lens cap, and it proves once again that you don't need an expensive camera to take good pictures. They're brilliant cameras, and I've just bought one.

Ruth's picture is really good. It's nice and sharp, and the exposure is good, if a little bit too light. She's used a little pop of flash to put a bit of a glint into the eyes of the animals and fill in the shadows because it's a bright sunny day. The flash is balanced perfectly with the daylight, but generally the image is about 1/2EV too bright. Had the image been printed, perhaps this would have been compensated for. However, nothing has been burnt out, although the colours could do with a boost, which would have happened had the picture been a fraction darker.

My only other criticism is that ring-tailed lemurs have got tails; we can see the baby's tail, but the adults' ones are hanging down below the edge of the frame. I'm trying to use my imagination to picture what they would look like, and I can imagine long tails that curl up at the end, but the fact is I'm having to imagine them because Ruth didn't quite get them into the picture. This would have been a much better picture had she turned the camera on its side and shot it upright with those tails hanging down into the bottom of the frame. Nevertheless, it's a well-seen picture and a good use of fill-in flash. I think Ruth could well have had a picture of the week had she shot it the other way round.



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Forthcoming tests

In the next few months AP hopes to run the following equipment through the most rigorous testing procedures in the industry...

Round-up	£600 digital SLRs	Jul
Nikon	10-24mm f/3.5-4.5 vs	Jul
Tamron	10-24mm f/3.5-4.5	Jul
Olympus	E-P1	Jul
Pentax	K-7	Aug
Sigma	DP2	Aug

Our guarantee to you

All our tests are conducted by people who understand the product area, as well as photography. We aim to discover any shortcomings, as well as finding those aspects that deserve praise. All our tests are thorough, honest and independent

Welcome to our test, reviews and advice section. Over the next few pages we will present this week's equipment tests, reader questions and technique pointers

Crumpler Gofer Royale 40 camera case £35.99

THE stylish Crumpler Gofer Royale cases come in a variety of sizes to fit most compact cameras. Like other Crumpler bags and cases, the Gofer Royale has a two-colour design, with dark brown/dark orange, white/dark green, dark red/white and black/grey colour combinations available.

Made from leather, the case offers protection against knocks and scratches, and the elasticated front and Velcro closing mechanism keep the camera secure. There is no wrist strap included, but the case does have a small hole in the top to allow you to thread through the camera's own strap. A belt loop is stitched to the rear of the case for all-day carrying.

Combining stylish design with a high-quality finish, the Crumpler Gofer Royale 40 camera case is a great way to keep a compact camera protected while on your summer holidays. **Richard Sibley**

● For more information visit www.intro2020.co.uk or call 01628 674 411



Micro verdict

A high-quality stylish case, but it comes at a price

Trek-Tech T-Pod £39.99

SMALL and convenient, table-top tripods are useful pieces of equipment to take with you on your travels. The Trek-Tech T-Pod comes supplied in a pouch measuring just 23cm long, and when built and fully extended it reaches 32cm in height.

There are three parts to the T-Pod: the legs, the extendable column and a small ball head. The head uses Trek-Tech's MagMount STAR (Square Tooth Anti Rotation) adapter, which is for use with DSLR cameras, or the Light Force adapter, which is designed for compact models. Both are included with the T-Pod. As the name suggests, the MagMount uses strong magnets to secure the camera in place. One is fitted to a camera's tripod mount, while the other is permanently set on the ball head. Once the magnets attach to each other, a simple clasp then locks them in place.

Trek-Tech claims that the mount can support around 4kg, so I tested a T-Pod using an Olympus mju 760 compact digital camera and then a Nikon D3 DSLR with a Nikkor 20-35mm f/2.8D lens attached. The DSLR and lens combination weighs around 2kg. The mju 760 was supported well, with little movement, and despite the claim I was still surprised when the D3 and lens were held reasonably securely by the MagMount. However, the camera did wobble when the shutter was pressed, and it was prone to slight movements. If you are using a DSLR and a slow shutter speed, I would recommend the use of a remote release or self-timer to prevent this. **Richard Sibley**

● For more information visit www.johnsons-photopia.co.uk or call 01782 753 300



Micro verdict

Not the most stable camera support, but it's useful for holidays

Canon Pixma Pro 9000 Mark II

Canon raw file compatibility and 48-bit printing promise to make the **Canon Pixma Pro 9000 Mark II** the printer of choice for many enthusiasts. We put it to the test

Angela Nicholson
Technical Editor



UNLIKE digital SLRs which are usually upgraded every 18 months or so, printers tend to have longer life cycles. So it was a bit of a surprise to many that after around three years of development and just two and a half years of sales, Canon has upgraded its two high-end desktop printers. The Pixma Pro

9000 Mark II is the more affordable of the two models and is aimed at serious enthusiast photographers.

Specification

The Pixma Pro 9000 Mark II uses eight dye-based inks, which naturally lend themselves to producing vibrant colour prints on glossy media.

Monochrome prints on matt and fine-art papers are also possible, however. The Pixma Pro 9500 Mark II (£729), on the other hand, uses pigment-based inks and is best suited to printing black & white images on matt papers – though colour prints are also possible. We plan to test Pixma Pro 9500 Mark II at a later date.

Unlike the original Pixma Pro 9000, the Mark II version has 48-bit (16-bits per channel) printing, which gives prints a wider tonal range, and smooth gradations. The FINE print head deposits ink with a minimum volume of two picolitres (pl) at a high resolution of 4800x2400dpi, which should ensure plenty of fine detail in the prints.



Available print sizes range from 10x15cm up to A3+ and 35.56cm (14in) wide, with gloss, matt, canvas and board (up to 1.2mm thick via the straight-path) media being supported.

Canon DSLR users will also appreciate being able to print their raw files from within the Digital Photo Pro (DPP) software supplied with their camera. A plug-in also allows direct printing of these files from Adobe Photoshop, but I found this isn't exclusive to Canon DSLR files and I was able to print Nikon DSLR raw files as well. This means there's no need to make raw file conversions, which take up hard drive space. Generously, Canon also supplies Adobe Photoshop Elements 6 for both Windows- and Mac OS-based computers.

In addition, Windows Vista users will find there is a new Ambient Light Correction feature that automatically adjusts the colours so they appear correct in the display lighting conditions.

Build and handling

As an A3+ printer the Pixma Pro 9000 Mark II is naturally a fairly bulky beast, but I was able to lift and manhandle it on to my desk unaided. When the paper support trays are folded in, it forms a neat rectangular block with a footprint of around 660x354mm. With the paper trays extended, an extra 18cm is required behind the printer and 33cm in front.

Canon doesn't factory-fit the print head so this must be installed before the printer can be used. It is a very

Colours are faithfully reproduced and the fine details I can see on screen are present on the print

straightforward process and has the advantage of making the print head an easily replaceable unit. The eight cartridges also slot cleanly into place.

Printing times

Printing times vary considerably depending upon whether a colour or monochrome print is being made. I timed from the moment the paper is drawn into the printer until it is ejected on to the receiving tray. With the highest print-quality option selected, a colour A3 print takes around 3mins 15secs. A b&w version of the same image takes about 16mins 15secs. Switching to A4 paper reduces the printing time to 1min 45secs and 8mins 55secs for colour and b&w images respectively. Monochrome prints can be produced more quickly if the greyscale option isn't selected, but the results have a slight colour shift because they are printed using coloured inks.

Performance

As usual, the first print I made with the Pixma Pro 9000 Mark II was

of our printer test chart and the results are very impressive. In fact, the printer has produced one of the best test chart prints I have ever seen. There is no banding in any of the colour gradations and the rainbow strip fades smoothly from one colour to the next. Even the cyan section, which often has quite harsh edges and stands out too boldly from its neighbours, has been reproduced very well. However, the yellow band is just a little wider than it is on screen and it takes longer to merge into the green and orange/red than it should. The resolution lines and bars are clear and sharp, and it is only when they are examined with a 5.5x loupe that it becomes apparent that they are made from dots. The moiré pattern is also accurately reproduced with no reversing. My main criticism is that the yellow looks a little more saturated than the colour I see on screen, but this is quite a common issue.

This impressive performance with the test chart is replicated with the prints of photographic images. Colours are faithfully reproduced and the fine details that I can see on screen are present on the print. Interestingly, the difference between the results obtained when printing from within Adobe Photoshop and from within DPP are much less pronounced than we found with the earlier Pixma Pro 9000. In fact, it is almost impossible to tell the DPP prints apart from the Photoshop-derived versions.

Monochrome images are also

reasonably good, but when the greyscale option is selected they are printed using the solitary black ink, and this can limit the tonal range leaving the image looking rather flat. I found the results vary from image to image, with some being considerably better than others depending upon the tonal range. Making black & white prints without the greyscale option selected speeds the process up and widens the print tonal range, but they lack the neutrality of the results made with the black ink.

Gradations are smooth thanks to 48-bit printing and the accuracy of the FINE print head's droplet placement, as well as the 2pl minimum volume of those droplets.

Verdict

With this new printer, Canon seems to have distanced itself a little from its stance that the original Pixma Pro 9000 is primarily intended for colour printing on glossy media. However, as a printer using dye-based inks and just one black ink, the Pixma Pro 9000 Mark II is best suited to colour work rather than monochrome printing. The results on matt media are good, but as is often the case they lack a little of the depth and saturation of prints made on glossy media.

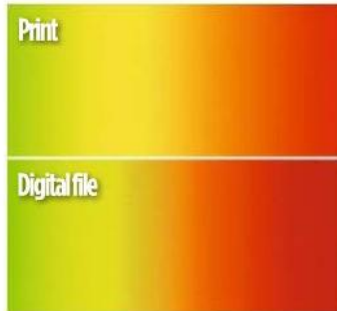
The Pixma Pro 9000 Mark II is a very good printer and will suit enthusiasts who primarily print colour images. However, those who wish to make monochrome prints on a regular basis would be better served by a printer with additional grey inks. **AP**

Far left: Though printing monochrome images using the coloured inks produces a greater range of tones than when just black ink is used, a slight colour cast is present in the darker midtones of this image

Left: Colour prints are very good from the Pixma Pro 9000 Mark II, though they look a little less saturated on matt media than on glossy surfaces

Right: The results from printing via Photoshop are almost indistinguishable from those produced via Canon's DPP software

Far right: The printer has done an excellent job with our test chart, but the yellow band is just a little wider than it should be



Data file

Canon UK, Woodhatch, Reigate, Surrey
RH2 8BF. Tel: 01737 220 000.
Website: www.canon.co.uk

RRP	£499.99
Max print size	A3+ (rear), 35.56x43cm (front)
Resolution	4800x2400dpi
Min droplet size	2pl
Print head	FINE print head with 768 nozzles per ink
Ink system	ChromaLife 100 dye-based inks in cyan, magenta, yellow, photo cyan, photo magenta, red, green and black
Interface	USB 2.0 High Speed and PictBridge
Dimensions	660x354x192mm
Weight	14.4kg

Lab results

Specification	●●●●●●●●●●	27/30
Build	●●●●●●●●●●	17/20
Handling	●●●●●●●●●●	18/20
Performance	●●●●●●●●●●	26/30



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Sony Alpha 380

The **Sony Alpha 380** has a sleek design compared to the Alpha 350, but apart from the new body what differences lie inside? We put it to the test

Richard Sibley
Technical Writer



WITH the announcement of the Alpha 230, 330 and 380, Sony now has a total of nine digital SLR cameras. Considering the company only released its first DSLR in June 2006 (having acquired Konica Minolta's camera division earlier that year), Sony has made a significant mark in the DSLR market. It is currently in third place in the UK DSLR market, behind Canon and Nikon.

The latest Alpha cameras offer a dramatic redesign of the camera body compared to the previous generation. Adorning the smaller and more compact form of the Alpha 380 is an almost two-tone grey and black finish, and the design continues with a sleek

menu system. However, apart from this, what exactly are the differences between the Sony Alpha 350 and the new Alpha 380?

Features

Like the Alpha 350, the new Alpha 380 features a 14.2-million-effective-pixel APS-C-size CCD sensor. As with previous Sony DSLRs, the heart of the Sony Alpha 380 is its Bionz processing engine. This provides the computing power in the Alpha 380 and controls many of the operations in the camera, include those that help to reduce image noise.

New features include the switch from CompactFlash to SD and Sony MS Duo cards, with the Alpha 380 having slots for each of these card types. There is also HDMI output from the camera, which allows you to connect the camera direct to an HD television.

If you have a Sony Bravia TV with PhotoTV HD and Bravia Sync, you can

control the playback of the images on the camera, via the TV remote control. The TV displays an embedded preview of the image that is specifically optimised for playback on HD screens.

One of the major features of the Alpha 350 is its Live View system, and the same technology is used in the new Alpha 380. In most cameras, when Live View is deployed the viewfinder mirror has to be up to allow light from the lens to reach the imaging sensor. This affects the autofocus mechanisms of the camera, which requires the mirror to be down for phase-detection focusing to take place. Many cameras therefore use slower contrast-detection AF when in Live View mode, or interrupt the Live View by releasing the mirror down momentarily to allow focusing to take place.

The Alpha 380 gets round this problem by having a smaller secondary image sensor in the viewfinder chamber. This uses light

Sony Alpha 380 Entry-level DSLR



At a glance

- 14.2-million-pixel sensor
- HDMI output
- New menu system
- Street price around £610 with 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 kit lens

that is reflected when the mirror is down to provide the Live View screen. As a result, the mirror can be left down to allow phase-detection focusing to take place.

Using Live View is made all the more interesting thanks to the 2.7in tilt-angle LCD screen on the rear of the camera, while SteadyShot image stabilisation helps



**Amateur
Photographer
Lab test**



Data file



Sony UK Ltd, The Heights, Brooklands, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 0XL. Tel: 01932 816 000. Website: www.sony.co.uk

Price	Around £580 (body only)
Sensor	CCD with 14.2 million effective pixels
Output size	4592x3056 pixels
Focal length mag	1.5x
Lens mount	Sony Alpha (accepts Minolta A-type lenses)
File format	Raw, JPEG, raw + JPEG simultaneously
Compression	Two-stage JPEG
Colour space	Adobe RGB, sRGB
Shutter type	Electronically controlled, vertical-traverse focal-plane shutter
Shutter speeds	30-1/4000sec in 1/3EV or 1/2EV steps plus bulb
Max flash sync	1/160sec Super SteadyShot off, 1/160sec Super SteadyShot on
ISO	ISO 100-3200
Exposure modes	Auto, program, aperture priority, shutter priority, manual, 6 scene modes and a custom mode
Metering system	40-segment honeycomb-pattern SPC metering, centreweighted and spot
Exposure comp	±3EV in 1/3EV or 1/2EV steps
White balance	Auto, 6 presets, plus custom setting and Kelvin adjustment
White balance bracket	Yes – over 3 frames, 2 selectable steps
Colour temp control	Yes – 2,500-99,000K with 19 steps magenta/green compensation
Drive mode	Max 2.5fps using viewfinder, 2fps using Live View for 6 raw or 3 raw + JPEG. JPEG continuous shooting until the card is full
LCD	2.7in LCD with 230,400 dots
Viewfinder type	Pentaprism
Field of view	Approx 95%
Dioptr adjustment	-2.5 to +1 dioptre
Focusing modes	Manual, single-shot AF, automatic AF, continuous AF
AF points	Nine (with centre-cross sensor) individually selectable points, auto or manual selection possible
DoF preview	No
PC socket	No
Built-in flash	Yes – GN 10m @ ISO 100
Cable release	RMT-DSLR1 infrared remote (not supplied)
Memory card	SD, SDHC or MemoryStick Duo
Power	Rechargeable Li-Ion battery NP-FM50H supplied
Connectivity	USB 2.0 Hi-Speed
Weight	490g (without battery or card/s)
Dimensions	128x97x71.4mm

Focal points

Smart Teleconverter

The Sony Alpha 380's Smart Teleconverter feature can be activated in Live View mode. It crops the image, creating either a 1.4x or 2x magnification, although this is at a reduced resolution so it's basically like the digital zoom found on compact cameras. However, at 2x the resolution is still seven million pixels, which is good enough for many situations.

Built-in flash

The power of the Sony Alpha 380's built-in flash has been reduced compared to that of the Alpha 350. It now has a Guide Number of 10m @ ISO 100, compared to 12m @ ISO 100 on the Alpha 350.



to keep images sharp. Both features are inherited from the Alpha 350.

Apart from the new design of the body, the Alpha 380 appears to have little in the way of new features. However, as we have seen recently, these slightly tweaked models often show significant improvements in image quality.

●●●●●●●●●● 8/10

Build and handling

The previous generation of entry-level and enthusiast Sony Alpha cameras are somewhat bulky compared to the competition. This has led to a redesign that leaves the Alpha 380 nearly 100g lighter than the Alpha 350.

Although the Alpha 380 is still quite deep, its size has been reduced. This is no doubt partly due to the switch from using CompactFlash cards to SD and MS cards, but the handgrip at the front of the camera has also been greatly reduced. There was some debate in the AP office about whether this is a positive development or not, with some saying it has made the camera more awkward to hold. I had my reservations at first, as I could only comfortably fit my index and fourth fingers on the grip, rather than all four of them. However, I found it is easy to use and was extremely well balanced when using the grip to carry it in my hand. A thumb-rest/grip on the rear of

the camera helps to make sure that, even with the small body of the camera, it is easy to hold.

Sony has taken a leaf out of Nikon's book when it comes to the new design of the menu system in the Alpha 380, with the camera explaining many of the settings as you change them. For example, when not using Live View, the rear screen displays all your shooting information and exposure settings. Usefully for entry-level photographers, there are two sliding scales on this screen that represent the aperture and shutter speed settings. The aperture scale has a person with a mountain the background, and at the largest aperture end of the scale the mountain is blurred, while at the smallest aperture both the mountain and person are sharp, illustrating the change in depth of field.

The most frequently used settings, such as ISO sensitivity and flash, have their own dedicated buttons. This allows them to be changed quickly. A Fn (Function) button can be used to change other commonly altered exposure settings, such as the AF mode, creative style and white balance. Less frequently used options can be found in the camera's main menu.

Generally there isn't much difference in the handling of the Alpha 350 and the Alpha 380. While the menu system, and its assistance for those learning photography, is an improvement and genuinely useful, some may find the smaller body slightly awkward.

●●●●●●●●●● 8/10

White balance and colour

In bright sunshine I found that the auto white balance setting of the Sony Alpha 380 produced images that are a touch on the blue side – a fault that is compounded by the slight underexposure of the images in bright sunlight. Using a sheet of white paper to set a custom white balance is simple to do following the on-screen instructions on the Alpha 380, and it sets a good neutral white balance.

With the Alpha 380, Sony has given users the option to shoot in Adobe RGB mode in all Creative Style modes, whereas previously it was a separate Creative Style of its own. Adobe RGB has a wider colour gamut that potentially allows for a more precise colour rendition over the standard sRGB colour profile used by the Alpha 380.

●●●●●●●●●● 8/10

Taken using the Sony Alpha 380 and Sony DT 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 SAM lens, I used the Live View and Smart Teleconverter features to capture the fine detail of the bee



Resolution, noise and sensitivity

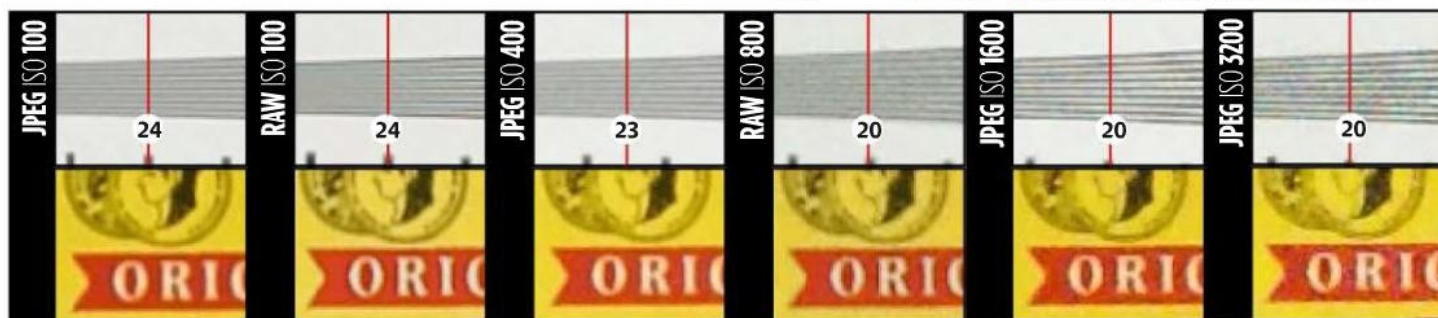
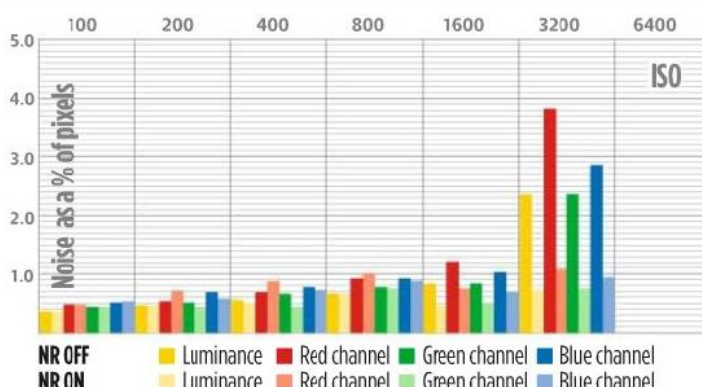
Having a 14.2-million-pixel sensor allows the Sony Alpha 380 to resolve a lot of detail. Although the resolution chart lines start to merge at around 24, the Alpha 380 gives the impression of lines being present up to nearly 28 before they completely blur.

This is an improvement on the Alpha 350, and our graph shows that, with NR

turned on there is a significant reduction in noise at high ISO sensitivities.

Reducing noise in raw files post-capture produces slightly better results than the in-camera NR system, but it still reduces sharpness.

●●●●●●●●●● 27/30



These images show 72ppi (100% on a computer screen) sections of images of a resolution chart, still-life scene and a grey card. We show the section of the resolution chart where the camera starts to fail to reproduce the lines separately. The higher the number visible in these images, the better the camera's detail resolution is at the specified sensitivity setting. The section of the still-life image contains the emblem on a standard-sized matchbox. The full scene can be viewed at <http://tinyurl.com/67sj96>. Images are taken using the Sigma 105mm f/2.8 EX DG macro

The phase-detection method is the most usable Live View system I have found on a DSLR

Metering

The 40-segment, honeycomb-patterned metering system of the Sony Alpha 380 does a reasonable job when set to its evaluative metering mode. However, it does slightly underexpose images when it has to deal with large highlight areas in a scene. While this means there are very few burnt-out areas, it results in underexposed midtones and shadows in a number of images.

●●●●●●●●●● 8/10

Viewfinder, LCD, Live View

The viewfinder on the Alpha 380 is unchanged from that on the Alpha 350, with a 95% view coverage. I found the viewfinder just about large enough to manually focus accurately. However, I was also relying on the AF confirmation just to make sure.

Live View is perhaps the stand-out feature of the Alpha 380. While the 2.7in, 230,400-dot LCD screen may not be the best specified, it is great when combined with the tilting mechanism and phase-detection AF.

Other manufacturers have improved the contrast-detection systems on their cameras, making them faster and therefore more usable, but despite not being the fastest AF system the phase-detection method on the Alpha 380

is still the most convenient and usable Live View system that I have found on a digital SLR camera.

●●●●●●●●●● 7/10

Dynamic range

With a dynamic range of 10.5EV, the Sony Alpha 380 is comparable with other enthusiast cameras, including the Nikon D300.

Like the Alpha 350, a D-Range Optimiser mode is available. This has three options: the default Off setting, On or On+ (Advanced). Each of the On settings lightens midtones, with the On+ offering a greater brightening of shadows and midtones. However, using the D-Range Optimiser makes noise more visible in these shadow areas.

●●●●●●●●●● 7/10

Autofocus

The nine-point phase-detection pattern of the Alpha 380 is a similar design to the Alpha 350, featuring a cross-type centre AF sensor. When using a single point to focus, the AF is responsive and good in low light. Changing it to automatic AF-A (Auto Focus Automatic) and the area to Wide works equally well, and the focus is snappy and accurate. The AF is just about on a par with equivalent models from Canon and Nikon.

Another Sony exclusive feature is the Eye-start AF. This uses two sensors underneath the viewfinder, which activates the AF and metering. This means that the camera begins to focus as soon as the camera is held to the eye, with the aim of reducing

focusing time. It works, and I can see that it will be useful for some people. However, I usually turn it off as I found it slightly annoying and for most of my photography it offers little advantage.

●●●●●●●●●● 7/10

Our verdict

ALTHOUGH the small, light body of the Alpha 380 puts it on a par with its contemporaries, some people may find that it is more awkward to hold than that of its predecessor. Personally, I like it. With the first-time DSLR user in mind, the new menu interface works well in educating and explaining the various camera functions. Also, the Live View system should sit right at home with those who have moved up from a compact camera.

It is perhaps a shame that more features couldn't have been added to the Alpha 380. I'm a little surprised, given the secondary sensor, that a video mode hasn't been added. However, the slight improvements will keep the Alpha 380 on a par with, and in several ways ahead of, other cameras in its price bracket.

Lab results

Features	●●●●●●●●●●	8/10
Noise/resolution	●●●●●●●●●●	27/30
Dynamic range	●●●●●●●●●●	7/10
LCD/viewfinder	●●●●●●●●●●	7/10
Build/handling	●●●●●●●●●●	8/10
Autofocus	●●●●●●●●●●	7/10
Metering	●●●●●●●●●●	8/10
AWB/colour	●●●●●●●●●●	8/10



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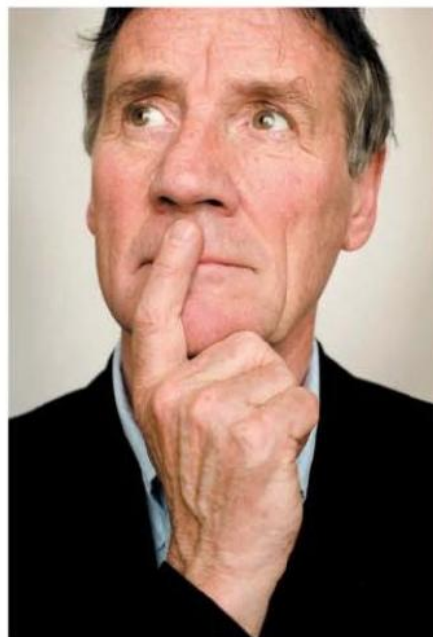
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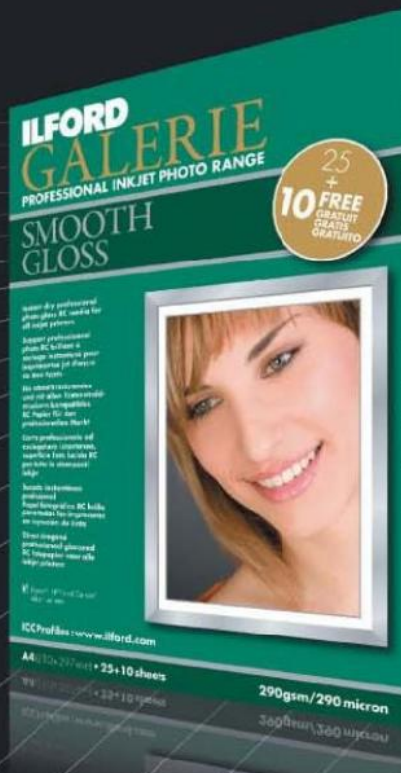
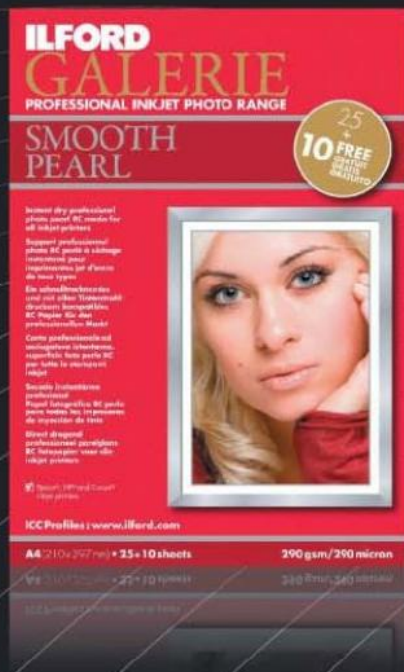
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Simply send your questions to: apanswers@ipcmedia.com or by post to: AP Answers, Amateur Photographer Magazine, IPC Media, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU.

Photo viewer

David Eastwood asks If I put an SD card directly into the Hi-Den Vision photo viewer (tested in AP 30 May), will the images be any different from those viewed on a television via a compatible DSLR camera using an HDMI lead? I also noted in your test that the machine is available direct from the USA, so does the equipment come with the correct voltage/adaptor for the UK?

Richard Sibley replies Embedded within the majority of JPEG files that are created by DSLR cameras are lower-resolution preview images. These smaller images are used when a device has to display a thumbnail or a preview of the image. If your camera has the facility to display images on a television via HDMI, it most likely optimises the preview image for this purpose.

This is the same preview file that is shown via the Hi-Den Vision photo viewer. However, the viewer also has an HD JPEG mode that, if activated, shows the full-resolution image. This shows a higher-quality image, but it will also slow down the device due to the

extra computing power that is needed. I would think that for most people, their camera's HDMI output will be more than adequate.

The photo viewer I tested came fitted with a US plug. As it is rated safe to use between 100V and 240V, it is fine to use with a standard plug adaptor without the need for voltage conversion. A suitable adapter is the US to UK plug adapter, which is available from Maplin (www.maplin.co.uk, order code DV95D) and costs £1.99. Hi-Den Vision is still seeking a UK distributor, but the photo viewer will come with a UK plug when distributed in this country.



Manual flash

R King asks I read with interest your two articles on fill-in flash (AP 2 and 16 May) as I have just begun to add this technique to my armoury. I have a Canon EOS 40D and EOS 350D, and a Canon 430EX Speedlite flash (the older model, not the new Mark II version).

You mention being able to alter the power of the flash in two ways. One is in + or – stops, which I understand. The other way is to select 'M' on the flashgun, which gives 1/1, 1/2, 1/4 and so on. What do these figures mean and which one should I use? Also, why are there two different methods?

Richard Sibley replies When you adjust the flash exposure compensation by moving it $\pm 1\text{EV}$, you are adjusting its power by one stop. By changing the exposure compensation by $\pm 1\text{EV}$ you are halving or doubling the power of the flash. This method is usually done on-camera when using the flash in automatic TTL mode. Many people prefer to adjust their flash manually, particularly when also using their camera in manual mode. Most flashguns describe their power output in the form of a fraction, with 1/1 being full power, 1/2 half power, 1/4 quarter power, and so on. Each time the flash output is halved, it is reduced by the equivalent of -1EV or -1 stop.

Off-camera flash

David Hopp asks I enjoyed the articles on using flash outside (AP 2 and 16 May), but neither my flashgun nor my cameras can be used wirelessly. They do have a socket into which a cable may be plugged, but all

Eliminating fungus

Barry Sutcliffe asks In his article *Breaking the rules* in AP 9 May, Barney Britton looks at a lens that has been afflicted with fungus. I don't have any objection to fungus on a lens in principle, so long as the infestation is minor and does not spread, but do you know whether fungus dies? If so, is it possible to tell whether or not it is dead? I have a Tamron zoom lens with a spot of fungus inside it, and a friend of mine at my camera club suggested placing an affected lens in the fridge overnight – he seemed to think that would do the trick. My local camera shop advised me to do the opposite, and place the lens on the top of a hot radiator overnight, wrapped in a cloth. Which method is best to kill and/or remove fungus?

Geoffrey Crawley replies Fungoid growth derives from spores often brought to life by warmth and humidity. It is significant that your affected lens is a zoom. When a zoom section extends, it sucks in air and, when retracting, pumps it out. Obviously, this action can also suck in spores and other particles.

Dismantling and cleaning is the only certain way to get rid of fungus, although even then it is impossible to guarantee that certain elusive spores won't cause a relapse. Cold may slow the spread, but it won't kill the spores, and warmth above a certain – unknown – temperature might kill them off but runs the risk of decentering or otherwise damaging the lens permanently. Ideally, to avoid fungus infestation, lenses should be stored carefully in dry conditions, with a packet of silica desiccant gel for company to remove moisture from the atmosphere around them.

If you decide to dismantle your lens, Optical Instruments (Balham) Ltd should be able to help. You can contact them at Unit 39, Neville Court, 27–43 Neville Road, Croydon CR0 2DS. Call 0208 664 9799 or visit www.optil.co.uk.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Question

The terms dots and pixels are sometimes used interchangeably, but in fact they refer to two different, although related, things.

When a screen or monitor displays an image it uses coloured pixels. Each of these pixels is made up of a red, green and blue dot. By varying the brightness of each of

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Your questions answered



Flashgun for a Nikon D60

Tucker77 asks What difference would an inexpensive flashgun make to my Nikon D60? People say that they're worth buying, but no one explains why. I don't mind buying a second-hand model, but have no idea what to look for. Can anyone help?

deddard replies If money is tight, then it may be better to look at third-party flashes, as there are a few around. Look for tilt and bounce as a minimum – a flash that can rotate its head is even better, but get a Nikon-dedicated one.

However, if the price of a third-party flash with these features starts to add up, the Nikon SB-600 should be seriously considered. It can form part of Nikon's Wireless iTTL flash system, which you may find useful later if you want to expand.

Richard Sibley replies Even a basic flashgun will increase your creative opportunities. The higher power of an external flashgun can light larger areas from further away, and a tilt-and-swivel head allows you to point the flash at a ceiling or a wall and let the light 'bounce' down to light a subject. This creates softer, more natural-looking shadows. The SB-600 is an excellent choice as it has a tilt-and-swivel head, and is reasonably priced. It can be triggered wirelessly, although this isn't possible with a Nikon D60 unless you buy the additional Nikon SU-800 Wireless Speedlight Commander or SB-900 flashgun. However, it is worth getting an SB-600 in case you upgrade to a Nikon DSLR with wireless flash capabilities in the future

the advertised cables seem very short. Surely I need a cable of at least three metres?

Richard Sibley replies For a simple fill-in effect it is fine to use the flash on your camera's hotshoe, or even the camera's built-in flash, but for a more modelled effect (as shown in the second part of our series in AP 16 May), it is best to use the flash off the camera on a tripod or lighting stand. If you don't have wireless flash capabilities, Lastolite produces a 3m Off Camera Flash cord for most cameras, which retains TTL metering. These cost around £29.99. For more information visit www.lastolite.co.uk



these dots, different coloured pixels can be created. To find out the number of dots that are used on a particular screen, you need to multiply the pixel count by three. Inversely, to find the number of pixels, divide the number of dots by three.

Typically, computer monitors have a resolution of between 60ppi and 100ppi (pixels per inch), but for printing, images should be 300ppi for photographic resolution.

In printing, the term 'dots' refers to the small droplets of ink that a printer can lay on a sheet of paper, but a printer requires many more than 300 small droplets of ink per inch

to make up an image. While the brightness of dots on a screen can be changed to render a particular colour pixel, the brightness of ink in a printer cannot be changed.

A printer therefore has to use many tiny cyan, magenta, yellow and black dots to reproduce a particular coloured pixel, for example, the Epson Stylus Photo R2880 prints at 5760x1440 dpi. Manufacturers also add more inks of different colours to their printers. This allows for a wider range of colours to be produced (this range is called a 'colour gamut'), which makes prints more faithful to the original image. Richard Sibley

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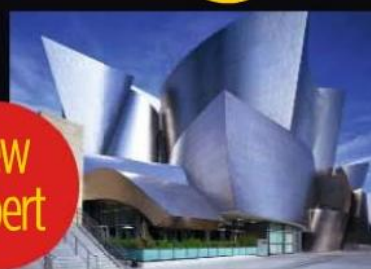
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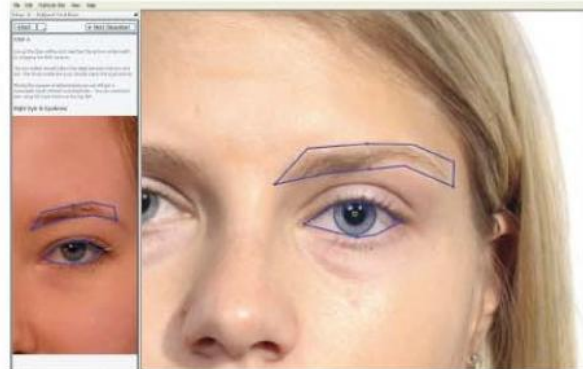
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Canon EF-S 18-200mm f/3.5-5.6 IS vs Tamron 18-270mm f/3.5-6.3 Di II VC LD Asph (IF)

Superzooms

Superzooms provide a broad focal range in a single unit, theoretically making multiple optics redundant. **Geoffrey Crawley** compares two from Canon and Tamron

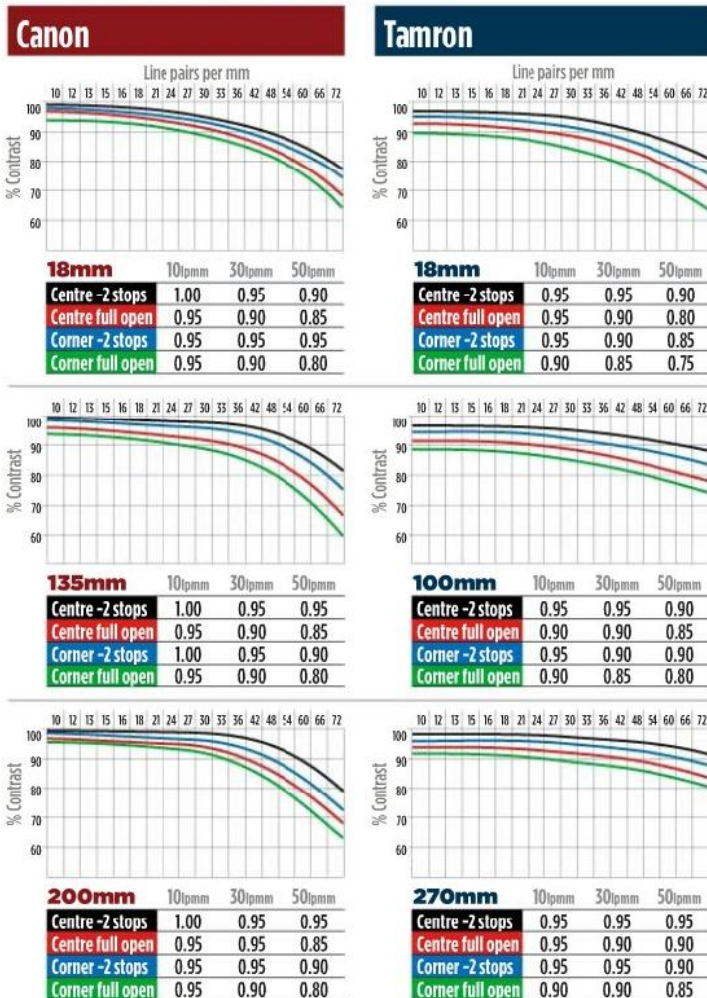
OPTICIANS enjoy challenges, and there is no greater challenge in lens design than the superzoom. This term is applied to a zoom lens that covers a broad focal length span from wideangle to telephoto. The Canon and Tamron lenses are both designed for APS-C-format digital cameras, and in 35mm (135-format) terms, the optics have the equivalent viewing angles

of 29-320mm and 27-432mm respectively, based on Canon's 1.6x crop factor. On 135 or full-frame formats, a 29mm focal length is by no means ultra-wide, but it is sufficient for many wideangle subjects. The aim of a superzoom is to provide a broad span in a single unit, making the carrying, interchange and purchase of more than one optic unnecessary.



Sharpness/definition

While the Canon 18-200mm has a high-contrast design, emphasising sharpness in the centre of the imaging field, the Tamron 18-270mm gives a more even cross-field performance at full aperture. The medium-high contrast of the Tamron lens also results in a more 'pictorial' feel than the Canon optic, whose resolving power drops quite markedly at around 42lpmm



Canon 18mm



Canon 200mm

Canon

EF-S 18-200mm f/3.5-5.6 IS

THOUGH the bayonet fitting is the same, an EF-S lens cannot be attached to a Canon EOS EF mount camera because EF-S units recess about 3mm deeper into the camera. This helps with wideangle lens design as the space requirement for the flipping mirror in an SLR camera means the rear of a short-focal length lens has to be further forward than is ideal. Hence the need for a retrofocus or reversed telephoto construction: one in which the back focus is longer than the focal length requires.

At 595g this Canon lens is by no means a lightweight. However, it is compact for its focal length span with a length of 101mm at 18mm from the camera body flange, extending to 162.5mm when set to 200mm. Overall barrel diameter is 78.5mm. The zooming extension can be locked at 18mm to prevent unwanted creep when carrying on the camera.

In autofocus mode the focus ring remains coupled so it rotates during focusing. However, focus is by internal group movement and the front of the lens does not rotate. As is now common, the rotation angle is short, which speeds AF and reduces battery drain. The closest focus distance is 0.45m (1.48ft), which gives a reproduction scale of 1:4 (quarter size). This is closer than would be expected of a 200mm focal length optic.

The main section of the barrel comprises the 31mm broad zoom control in a coarsely ridged rubber, giving a firm, slip-free grip. The rotation angle between 18mm and 200mm focal length is 80°, about

right for rapid but not too abrupt zooming. Zoom movement is smooth, especially considering the length of the extension, and is a two-draw action. Both sections extend together until the focal length reaches 135mm, when the rear one stops and the front moves forward to give 200mm. There is a very minimum wobble at full extension and then only if you try.

Optically

This construction of the lens comprises 16 elements in 12 groups. Two elements are in ultra (low colour) dispersion (UD) glass. This type of glass reduces colour aberration by bringing light wavelengths (colours) closer to a common focus than 'normal' optical glasses. One UD element is used as the rear component in the front doublet group, now a common location for this type of element. In fact, the whole section in front of the diaphragm strongly resembles that of a number of recently reviewed lenses – and that of the 18-270mm Tamron lens.

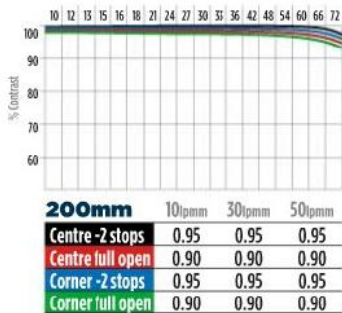
This Canon lens uses two aspheric elements. One, as is now often seen, is in the rear 'field' group, which distributes the image rays on to the recording surface – in this case the photosensor. The rear element's 26mm diameter equates well with the 27mm diagonal of the APS-C format. This indicates minimal ray divergence to the edges and corners of the sensor frame, in turn reducing vignetting and colour fringing.

The construction is somewhat complicated by the inclusion of the image stabilisation module.

Understanding the graphs

The graphs shown here demonstrate the ability of the lenses on test to resolve detail. As the lines move to the right along the horizontal axis, the detail the lens is asked to record becomes finer, thus the lens becomes less successful at recording it accurately.

Each sloping line on the graph represents measurements taken from a particular area of the image – the centre and the corner – with both measurements being made for images taken using the widest aperture as well as with the aperture closed by two stops. The grid places a numerical value on the success of the lens in recording these details



at three line-pair-per-millimetre points: 10lpmm, 30lpmm and 50lpmm. The graph on the left demonstrates what we would expect from a near perfect lens. As the lines are all very close together, the performance of the lens is almost as good at the edge of the

frame as it is in the middle – where lenses are at their best. The lines stay close to the top of the graph, as the lens is able to clearly resolve very fine detail. All lenses have a limit to what they can resolve, and this is shown where the lines of the graph begin to slope downwards. In this example the lens only starts to struggle at the 72lpmm point.



Tamron 18mm



Tamron 270mm

As expected, the frame edge quality at full aperture improves towards the longer focal lengths

Optically, this is a fully up-to-date modern zoom lens.

Performance

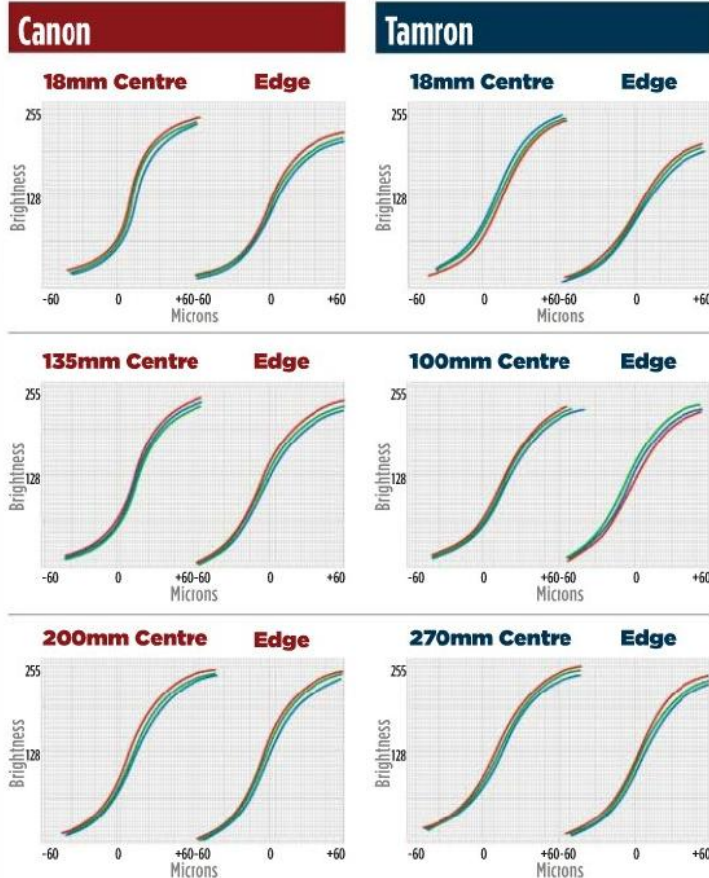
This lens offers a sharp, well-defined image with high contrast. As often happens with high-contrast lenses, there is a minor tail-off in definition at the highest resolution figures. Central image quality at full aperture is high across the zoom range with good gradation of tones and hues. As expected, the frame edge quality at full aperture improves towards the longer focal lengths. It should be noted, however, that as usual with superzoom lenses the working aperture for cross-frame optimum quality is inevitably low. Taking two stops down as a criterion – though three stops may show the very best quality – the Canon zoom lens is at its optimum at $f/7.1$ at 18mm, $f/10$ at 50mm, and $f/11$ at 135mm and 200mm. This limitation of superzooms is worth bearing in mind if sports and action coverage figures among your interests. A built-in anti-shake system certainly helps steady images at low shutter speeds, but low speeds are of no help if you are covering moving subjects. The image

stabilisation system in this Canon lens offers a simple on/off choice.

In other performance parameters this Canon lens behaves well, indicating that the design of wide-span zooms is progressing. However, the chief problem will always remain: the design configuration for the wideangle, short-focal length end has to be retrofocus (reverse telephoto). At the tele end it has to be telephoto. To do both efficiently in one unit is just not possible, and compromises have to be made. The success of a superzoom lens depends on the way that compromise is handled. At the far retro end (18mm), the Canon zoom lens gives close to 1% barrel distortion and fairly severe corner vignetting of almost 1EV. This changes to pincushion distortion by 50mm with a significant reduction in vignetting. From there on there are minor improvements in both parameters. Stopping down eliminates vignetting from 24mm on. Full aperture fall-off figures at 135mm and 200mm are high, resulting no doubt from the decision to minimise the front group size and weight. Lateral chromatic aberration is well controlled centrally throughout, with the frame margins improving towards the tele end. Autofocus uses a standard DC motor drive rather than Canon's USM function, but it is quiet at 22dB over 35dB background. Normally, AF speed does not vary with focal length. However, this zoom lens does quite markedly. At 18mm, infinity to closest focus is really fast at 372 milliseconds (ms), but it increases to a slow 890ms by 200mm.

Chromatic aberration

Both optics have fared well in our chromatic aberration test. The Canon 18-200mm is excellent centrally and shows relatively low dispersion at the frame edges. The problems of a wide-span superzoom show as a contrast loss off centre at 18mm with both lenses.

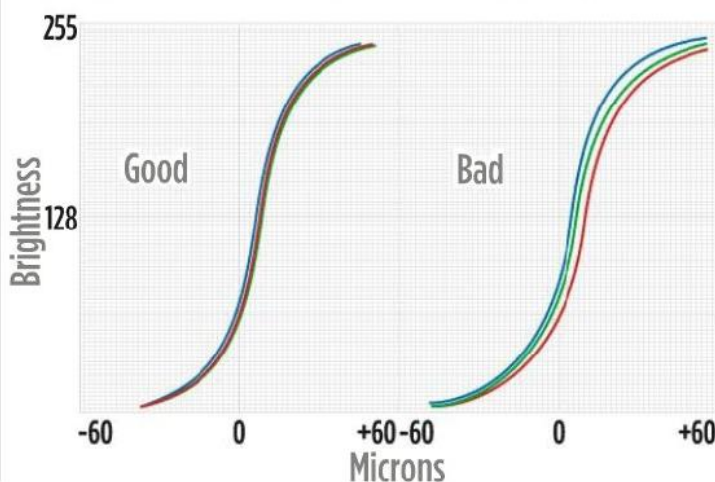


Understanding the graphs

Lateral chromatic aberration induces colour fringing and loss of sharpness, so edges are rimmed with colour and are soft. These graphs show the degree of error when the ISO 12,233 slanted knife-edge test is performed at the key focal length settings. Measurements are taken from the centre of the image and from the edge, where lens performance dips.

The greater the divergence of the red, green and blue lines, the greater the error and the more likely the lens is to exhibit the effects of chromatic aberration.

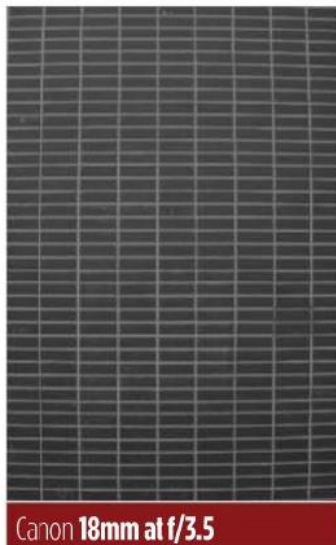
Some divergence in the lines is to be expected, especially at the shorter focal length settings of zoom lenses and at the edge of the image frame. It is the overall appearance that is important rather than the detail of the curves. The graphs below show typical good and bad results.



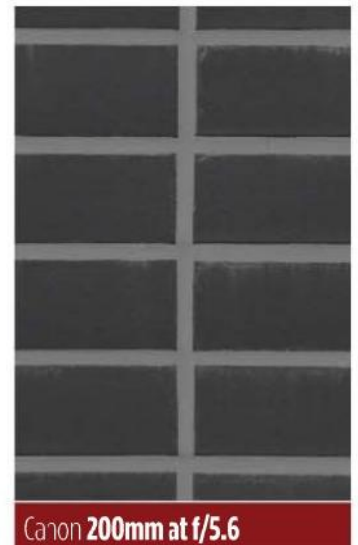
Vignetting

Vignetting figures around $\frac{2}{3}$ EV at full aperture mean fall off is visible in images captured using the APS-C-sized sensors these lenses are designed to cover

These diagrams indicate the vignetting characteristics of each lens at full aperture. They show the degree of difference in the illumination between the centre of the image frame and the corners of the frame. Measured in EV, figures larger than $\frac{1}{3}$ EV will be clearly visible. Deviations of $\frac{1}{6}$ EV and below will not show. The darkest areas indicate shading of about $\frac{1}{2}$ EV and the lighter areas $\frac{1}{3}$ EV, but in reality the effect is graduated.



Canon 18mm at f/3.5



Canon 200mm at f/5.6

Bowing lines give away the extent of the barrel distortion at 18mm, but this switches to lower levels of pincushioning at longer focal lengths

Tamron

18-270mm f/3.5-6.3 Di II VC LD Asph (IF) Macro

WITH an ID as long as the name of a famed Welsh village, this zoom lens sports the longest zoom span (15x) currently available. The 'Di II' suffix indicates that it is designed to cover only APS-C-sized sensors while 'VC' indicates 'Vibration Control', Tamron's brand name for its anti-camera shake mechanism. In this instance, 'Macro' indicates that the minimum subject distance (0.49m) is closer than would be expected from a 270mm lens.

At 550g it is a little lighter than the Canon zoom lens, though there is no difference in length between them when set to 18mm. The Tamron lens is broader in diameter at 79.5mm. As might be expected, the two-draw zoom extension at 270mm is greater: the overall length then is 191mm. Focus is by internal group movement (hence IF in the name). The manual focus ring rotates in AF mode (though the front element does not), and the rotation angle is unusually short, which makes it difficult to focus manually at the wideangle end. The zoom control forms the main section of the barrel, and the action is smooth until about 70mm where there is strong temporary resistance. It will probably ease off with use, as it did to an extent during testing. At full zoom there is only a hint of front section wobble and the control ring can be locked at 18mm to prevent extension.

Optically

The construction uses 18 elements in 13 groups. Three elements have aspheric surfaces (Asph), and two are

in low (colour) dispersion (LD) glass, one of which is in the front doublet group of this double-Gauss design. Tamron states it does not use extra (aka ultra or super) low dispersion glass – which has a high refractive index – in order to realise the aim of a 15x zoom factor. Therefore, the refractive power has been distributed throughout the optical system. The schematic also shows the presence of an element in anomalous dispersion glass, which is a little unusual: it is the third from the front between the LD glass and first aspheric. Anomalous dispersion glass differs from the low and super types in that the dispersion away from a common focus varies markedly in a particular wavelength or colour band of the spectrum. It is used in conjunction with low or sometimes super low dispersion glasses to equalise colour corrections. Here it has presumably helped make the use of ultra low glass unnecessary and so allowed the high zoom factor.

The design is telecentric. Unlike the Canon lens, the rear element of which equals the diagonal of the APS-C-sized sensor, the Tamron optic has a narrower, 20mm rear glass. On the face of it there might be an expectation of higher vignetting figures, but that is not the case. With the Canon lens's deeper recessing bringing it closer to the sensor, a broader exit element will have been needed. In any event, this ground-breaking Tamron optic is a first-class design, making full use of modern optical technology.

Curvilinear distortion

These figures illustrate the degree of 'bend' in a straight line that was recorded 4mm from the top edge of the frame, with '-' indicating barrel distortion and '+' indicating pincushion distortion.

	Canon			Tamron		
	18mm	135mm	200mm	18mm	100mm	270mm
Full	1	2/3	<2/3	Full	>2/3	<1/3
-1	>1/3	<1/3	1/6	-1	1/2	-
-2	1/3	-	-	-2	<1/3	-

Apart from full aperture at 18mm, these results show good vignetting figures for a superzoom. At one stop down, they become almost insignificant

These are excellent figures. Tamron's attention to reducing the vignetting problem has been successful. It is only significant at 18mm full aperture

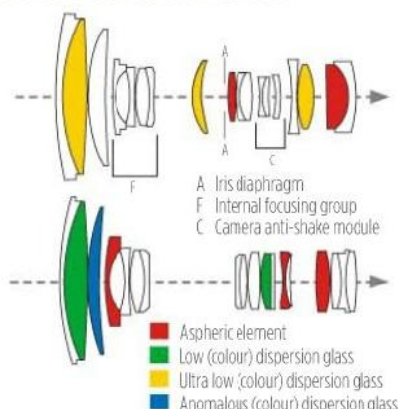
The more restricted focal length span allows a better (almost monofocal) result, except at 18mm

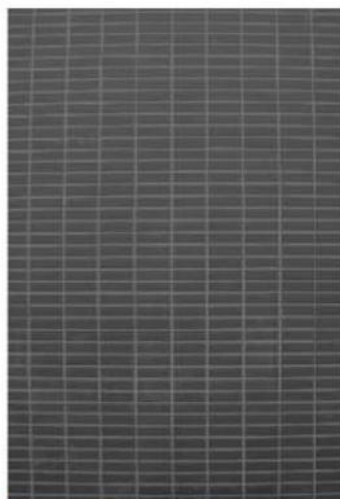
Excellent at 270mm, but the wider span makes it difficult to correct field distortion over the zoom range

Lens construction

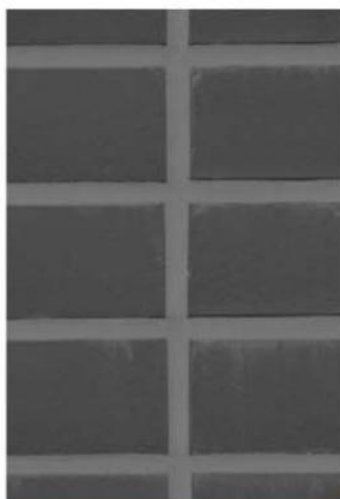
Canon A double-Gauss design with an IS module. The UD elements and aspherics enable a relatively compact, if weighty, construction. The broad rear group helps vignetting reduction

Tamron A double-Gauss construction, but the refractive power and colour corrections are achieved differently using low, not ultra-low, dispersion glass and one anomalous dispersion element





Tamron 18mm at f/3.5



Tamron 270mm at f/6.3

Curvilinear distortion is slightly less of an issue at the 18mm point, but there is a little more pincushioning at the telephoto end of the lens

“The lure of one lens for all seasons is great, so the demand for the superzoom continues to exist”

Performance

Extending the zoom factor to 15x is a bold step for Tamron. The increase in maximum focal length from 250mm to 270mm seems innocuous, but the superzoom design paradox becomes harder to resolve with each increase, no matter how small. The retrofocus or reverse telephoto design necessary at the shorter focal lengths is, as the name implies, the diametric opposite to the telephoto design required at the longer focal length end. That is why two shorter span zoom lenses will give better results. Quite how the balance of characteristics is decided upon depends on the individual manufacturer's assessment of the market. The lure of one lens for all seasons is great, so the demand for the superzoom continues to exist.

In terms of sharpness and definition, this Tamron lens gives an even cross-frame quality at full aperture across its focal length span. Contrast is medium-high, which will please the pictorialist not keen on impactful results. After all, such impact can be introduced in image-editing software. Resolution is high with images having an attractive

smoothness of gradation and hue. The figures for curvilinear distortion are of a comparatively high order at the nearer distances, but for subjects in the middle and far distance – at least from a focal length of around 70mm and above – the pincushion effect is no greater than has been found with some monofocals. As with the Canon lens, the weakest performance from this Tamron optic is at the 18mm end of the span – inevitable for all the reasons already discussed. Tamron's special attention to the reduction of vignetting shows in the figures found. Again, a focal length of 18mm shows noticeable full aperture fall-off in the corners. From 50mm it is well under control, being virtually eliminated at one stop down. Lateral colour aberration, bringer of fringing, is controlled centrally in the frame, but not so well towards the edges. Autofocus noise level is noticeable at 34dB over 35dB background. Its speed of 855ms from infinity to closest focus is slow.

With both these lenses, one superzoom characteristic is again noticeable. The difference between a varifocal (length) lens and a zoom is that the latter stays in focus with focal length changes. On superzooms a little latitude is allowed. With autofocus, the change is instantly corrected and may pass unnoticed, but when manually focusing it is important to check after any focal length change. The old advice to zoom in to focus and then out to shoot no longer applies. Some short-span zooms also exhibit this deviation. **AP**

Data file

	Canon	Tamron
	Canon UK, Woodhatch, Reigate, Surrey RH2 8FB. Tel: 01737 220 000. Web: www.canon.co.uk	Intro 2020, Priors Way, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 2HP. Tel: 01628 674 411. Web: www.intro2020.co.uk
RRP	£699.99	£599.99
Lens mount	Canon	Canon, Nikon
Max aperture	f/3.5-5.6	f/5-6.33.5-6.3
Angle of view	64° 30' - 6° 30'	75° 33' - 5° 55'
Near focus	0.45m	0.49m
Diaphragm blades	Six	Seven
Filter size	72mm	72mm
Weight	595g	550g
Measured focal length	17.7-197mm	17.4-266mm
Dimensions	78.6x102mm	101x79.6mm

Our verdict

THESE days there are few bad lenses. Computer-aided design has ensured that optics from the leading manufacturers reach a high level of performance. The differences stem from various philosophies and the need to meet a particular retail price bracket. The balance of corrections possible at a given specification is not fixed. For example, full central sharpness at full aperture may be balanced off with lower frame edge and corner quality.

The two zoom optics reviewed here are good examples. Both are first-class modern lenses, but of the two, the Canon lens puts more emphasis on giving an vivid image full of impact. Tamron, on the other hand, has balanced the image properties more to those seeking what are termed – obscurely perhaps – pictorial qualities. This means a smooth transition of tonal and colour gradation, and a more restrained rendering of subject outlines and main features. In fact, this philosophy has been evident in other Tamron designs over time. This lens has stretched the zoom factor with success, which may influence a Canon owner. Although the Canon lens will obviously only fit Canon EF-S cameras, the Tamron optic will fit any Canon EOS model, albeit with severe vignetting. Either optic will please someone looking for a 'one for all' zoom lens, though the decrease in aperture required for optimum quality as focal length increases should be borne in mind. This can be overcome by splitting the focal length range between two zoom lenses. As for cost, the difference in street price between the Canon and Tamron lenses is minimal, which takes that factor out of the equation.

Canon 18-200mm f/3.5-5.6 IS

Specification	●●●●●●●●	29/30
Build	●●●●●●●●	18/20
Handling	●●●●●●●●	18/20
Performance	●●●●●●●●	25/30

90%

Tamron 18-270mm f/3.5-6.3 Di II VC LD Asph (IF) Macro

Specification	●●●●●●●●	29/30
Build	●●●●●●●●	18/20
Handling	●●●●●●●●	18/20
Performance	●●●●●●●●	26/30

91%

“These days there are few bad lenses. Computer-aided design has ensured that optics from leading manufacturers reach a high level of performance”

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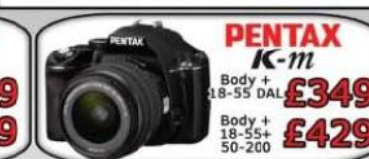
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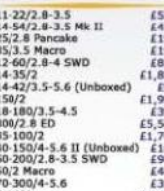
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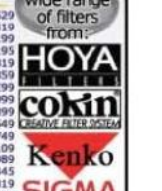
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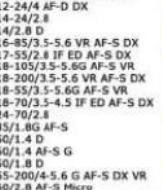
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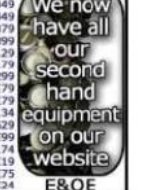
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85mm f2.8 PC E	£1299.99	or	£53 mth	24-70mm f2.8 AF-S G ED	£1198.99	or	£49 mth
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£18.59	£39.14	£34.24	£73.39	£24.46	£34.24	£195.73	£76.33	£3.91	£126.25	£3.91	£3.91	£14.67	£15.65	£15.65	£293.60	£129

CF-D80	EN-EL3e	EH-5A	DK-21M	DK-5	SB-400	SC-28	ML-L3	MC-DC1	BM-7	AS-15	MB-D80	DR-6	DG-2	Capture NX2	UC-E4	SB-900
£33.27	£48.93	£73.39	£19.56	£3.91	£149	£48.93	£14.67	£29.35	£6.84	£18.59	£127.22	£195.73	£76.33	£126.25	£15.65	£319

EN-EL3e	MB-D10	EH-6 AC	TH-5A	MH-18A	MH-19	SB-900	WT-4	DK-17A	ML-3	DG-2	DK-18	DR-5	Capture NX2	MC-35	MC-36	MC-30
£48.93	£233.91	£73.39	£73.39	£34.24	£195.73	£319	£151.70	£19.56	£185.94	£76.33	£5.86	£195.73	£126.25	£97.86	£117.43	£54.80

EN-EL3e	MB-D10	WT-4	MH-18A	MH-19	EH-6 AC	EH-5A	DK-21M	DK-23	BM-8	DR-6	SC-28	MC-35	MC-36	DK-5	Camera Control Pro 2	BF-1a
£48.93	£233.91	£151.70	£34.24	£195.73	£73.39	£73.39	£19.56	£3.91	£6.84	£195.73	£48.93	£97.86	£117.43	£3.91	£127.22	£4.88

EN-EL4a	MH-21	MH-22	BL-4	EH-6	WT-4B	DK-17A	MC-30	MC-36	ML-3	SC-29	DR-5	DG-2	DK-17M	Camera Control Pro 2	DK-18	MC-35
£88.07	£127.22	£176.16	£12.71	£73.39	£151.70	£19.56	£54.80	£117.43	£185.94	£58.71	£195.75	£76.33	£19.56	£127.22	£5.86	£97.86

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TIPA

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	£117.22	£39.14	£29.35	£39.14	£88.07	£68.50	£23.48	£17.61	£17.61	£146.80	£17.53	£7.45	£8.31	£6.75	£19.56	£34.24	£48.93
Canon EOS 40D	BG-E2N	OSKE3	BP511	CB-SL	CA-PS400	CA-S70	ACK-E2	RS-B0N3	TCB0N3	LC 5	Angle Finder C	EP-EX15	Rubber Straps L	DioSeries	Eyepup EB	WFT-EA	IFC-500U
	£122.34	£132.49	£53.82	£39.14	£88.07	£53.83	£58.71	£39.14	£97.86	£322.96	£146.80	£17.53	£5.85	£8.31	£5.58	£587.21	£27.39
Canon EOS 5D Mark II	BG-E6	LP-E6	Wide Strap L6	OSKE3	RC-5	CB-S70	CA-RS0N3	TCB0N3	LC 5	Angle Finder C	EP-EX15	Rubber Straps L	DioSeries	Eyepup EB	Focus Screen L6-5.6	WFT-E4	IFC-500U
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	£97.86	£88.07	£293.60	£28.38	£39.14	£97.86	£322.96	£146.80	£24.46	£19.56	£9.78	£25.44	£586.24	£132.49	£20.55	£19.56	£27.39
Canon EOS-1D Mark II	LP-E4	ACK-E4	LCE4	CB-S70	RSB0N3	CB-TCB0N	LCS	Angle Finder C	Antifog	DioSeries	Eyepup EG	Focus Screen L	WFT-E2	OSKE3	Hand Strap E1	Wide Strap L6	IFC500U
	£97.86	£88.07	£293.60	£28.38	£39.14	£97.86	£322.96	£146.80	£24.46	£19.56	£9.78	£25.44	£586.24	£132.49	£20.55	£19.56	£27.39

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OLYMPUS E-SYSTEM



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E-620 BODY + 14-42mm + 40-150mm lens	£694.99 WAS £723.99
E-620 BODY + 25mm lens	£614.99 WAS £679

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The NEW mirrorless Olympus E-P1. It's not a compact, it's not a DSLR - it's a pen! Based on the original Olympus PEN from 1959. This ultra-compact, DSLR quality, hybrid device can even record HD quality movies - with depth of field and Art Filter effects familiar from still photography.

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E-P1 + 17mm
E-P1 + 17mm + 14-42mm



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E-30 Body Only	£814.95 or £33 mth	E-3 Body Only	£989 or £41 mth
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Sony A200
A superb 10.2 megapixel imaging, high-sensitivity shooting, and Super SteadyShot® in-camera image stabilisation that reduces blur. It's also fast, lightweight and easy to operate.

A200 + 18-70mm lens	£297.99 or £13 mth
A200 + 18-70mm + 75-300mm lens	£419.99 or £17 mth
A200 + 18-200mm lens	£529.99 or £22 mth



Sony Alpha 230 *Saving on A230 + 18-55mm
A lightweight and compact 10.2 megapixel DSLR. It has image stabilisation incorporated into the body so it benefits all your other lenses. The 9-point AF system also ensures the sharpest possible images. It even features eye-strap focusing to avoid missing those important shots. Other features include a 2.7" LCD screen.

A230 + 18-55mm f3.5-5.6 DT lens	£448.99 WAS £478
A230 + 18-55mm + 55-200mm	£599.99 or £25 mth



Sony A350

A350 Body Only	£348.99 or £15 mth
A350 + 18-70mm lens	£398.99 or £17 mth
A350 + 18-70 + 55-200mm	£519.99 WAS £522.99
A350 + 18-200mm lens	£629.99 or £26 mth



Sony Alpha 380 *Saving on Body Only
The Sony Alpha 380 Digital SLR Body is a light, compact and easy-to-use 14.2 megapixel DSLR. It comes with SteadyShot, Inside and Quick AF Live View, HD output and a 2.7" tilt LCD Screen.

A380 BODY ONLY	£574.99 WAS £628
A380 + 18-55mm + 55-200mm	£759.99 or £31 mth
A380 + 18-55mm f3.5-5.6 DT lens	£608.99 or £25 mth



Sony A700
Aimed at serious photo enthusiasts and semi-professionals, the A700 teams uncompromising performance and responsiveness with superlative HD image quality.

A700 BODY ONLY	£568.99 or £24 mth
A700 + 16-80mm lens	£974.99 or £40 mth
A700 + 16-105mm lens	£834.99 or £34 mth



Sony A900
A full-frame 24.6 megapixel DSLR with a fast and accurate 9-point AF with 10 focus assist points, 5fps continuous shooting at full resolution and a high resolution 3" Xtra Fine LCD.

A900 BODY ONLY	£1899.99 or £77 mth
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Pentax K-M
Ideal entry level DSLR and features 10.2 megapixels, a 2.7" LCD screen, in-built Shake Reduction mechanism and advanced Auto-Mode which pre-selects the correct mode for your shot.

K-M + 18-55mm	£339 or £14 mth
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Pentax K200D
Incorporates a newly developed image sensor to bring out the optimum performance of Pentax interchangeable lenses, while offering the features and functions needed to maximise the pleasure and excitement of photography.

K200D BODY ONLY	£354.99 or £15 mth
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Pentax K20D
Incorporates a newly developed image sensor to bring out the optimum performance of Pentax interchangeable lenses, while offering the features and functions needed to maximise the pleasure and excitement of photography.

K20D BODY ONLY	£579.99 or £24 mth
K20D + 18-55mm II	£598.99 or £25 mth
K20D + 18-55 II + 50-200mm	£699.99 or £29 mth



Pentax K7
Ideal entry level DSLR and features 10.2 megapixels, a 2.7" LCD screen, in-built Shake Reduction mechanism and advanced Auto-Mode which pre-selects the correct mode for your shot.

K7 BODY ONLY	£1194.99 or £49 mth
K7 + 18-55mm II	£1219.99 or £50 mth
K7 + 18-55 II + 50-200mm	£1324.99 or £54 mth

SIGMA LENSES We are a Sigma Pro Lens stockist

4.5mm f2.8 EX DC HSM	£718.99	or £30 mth
8mm f3.5 EX DG FishEye	£728.99	or £30 mth
10mm f2.8 EX DG HSM	£568.99	or £24 mth
15mm f2.8 EX DG FishEye	£558.99	or £23 mth
20mm f1.8 EX DG	£478.99	or £20 mth
24mm f1.8 EX DG	£398.99	or £17 mth
28mm f1.8 EX DG	£322.99	or £14 mth
30mm f1.4 EX DC HSM (62mm)	£388.99	or £16 mth
50mm f2.8 EX DG Macro (Canon Fit)	£238.99	or £10 mth
50mm f1.4 EX DG HSM (Sigma Fit)	£358.99	or £15 mth
70mm f2.8 EX DG Macro	£383.99	or £16 mth
105mm f2.8 EX DG Macro	£564.99	or £23 mth
180mm f3.5 EX DG Macro	£727.99	or £30 mth
300mm f2.8 EX DG HSM	£2188.99	or £89 mth
500mm f4.5 EX DG HSM	£3788.99	or £154 mth
800mm f5.6 APO EX DG HSM	£5248.99	or £213 mth
10-20mm f4.5-5.6 EX DC HSM	£399.99	or £17 mth
12-24mm f4.5-5.6 EX DG	£577.99	or £28 mth
17-70mm f2.8-4.5 DC	£246.99	or £10 mth
18-50mm f3.5-5.6 DC (Four Thirds Fit)	£73.99	
18-50mm f3.5-5.6 DC (Canon Fit)	£75.99	
18-50mm f3.5-5.6 DC (Nikon Fit)	£94.99	
18-50mm f2.8 EX DC Macro A/S System	£318.99	or £13 mth
18-50mm f2.8 EX DC (Canon Fit 72mm)	£318.99	or £13 mth
18-50mm f2.8 HSM (Nikon Fit)	£318.99	or £13 mth
18-125mm f3.8-5.6 DC OS HSM (Canon Fit)	£248.99	or £10 mth
18-200mm f3.5-6.3 DC	£217.99	or £12 mth
18-200mm f3.5-6.3 DC OS	£287.99	or £12 mth
18-250mm f3.5-6.3 DC OS HSM	£499.99	or £21 mth
24-70mm f2.8 EX DG Macro	£428.99	or £18 mth
28-70mm f2.8 EX DG	£238.99	or £10 mth
28-300mm f3.5-6.3 DC MACRO	£249.99	or £11 mth
50-150mm APO f2.8 EX DC II	£563.99	or £23 mth
50-500mm f4-6.3 EX DG II	£1058.99	or £43 mth
55-200mm f4-5.6 DC	£99.99	
55-200mm f4-5.6 HSM (Nikon Fit)	£99.99	

Check our website for DSLR compatibility with SIGMA Lenses.

SONY LENSES

16mm f2.8 Fisheye	£549	or £23 mth
20mm f2.8	£429	or £18 mth
28mm f2.8	£179	
35mm f1.4G	£1049	or £43 mth
50mm f1.4 AF	£284	or £12 mth
50mm f2.8 AF Macro (D)	£409	or £17 mth
85mm f1.4 ZA Planar T*	£1059	or £43 mth
100mm f2.8 Macro AF (D)	£509	or £21 mth
135mm f2.8 STF	£859	or £35 mth
300mm f2.8G	£4299	or £175 mth
500mm f8 Reflex	£319	or £22 mth
11-18mm f4.5-5.6 DT AF (D) Lens	£469	or £19 mth
16-80mm f3.5-4.5	£548	or £23 mth
16-80mm f3.5-4.5 ZA VS T* DT	£549	or £23 mth
16-105mm f3.5-5.6	£429	or £18 mth
18-70mm f3.5-5.6 AF (D) Lens	£129	
18-200mm f3.5-6.3 DT AF (D) Lens	£389	or £16 mth
18-250mm f3.5-6.3	£429	or £18 mth
24-70mm f2.8 ZA	£1299	or £53 mth
55-200mm f4-5.6	£179	
70-300mm f4-5.6 G	£669	or £28 mth
75-300mm f4-5.6 AF (D) Lens	£179	

OLYMPUS LENSES

8mm f3.5 Fisheye	£689	or £28 mth
25mm Pancake Lens	£199	
35mm f3.5 Macro	£194.95	
50mm f2 Macro ZUIKO ED Digital	£449	or £19 mth
7-14mm f4 ZUIKO Digital	£1399	or £57 mth
11-22mm f2.8-3.5 ZUIKO Digital	£735	or £30 mth
12-60mm ED f2.8-4.0 SWD	£829	or £34 mth
14-42mm ED f2.5-5.6	£210	or £9 mth
14-34mm f2.8-3.5 ZUIKO Digital	£424.99	or £18 mth
18-180mm f3.5-4.5	£419	or £17 mth
35-100mm f2.0	£1949	or £79 mth
50-200mm ED f2.8-3.5 SWD	£999	or £41 mth
40-150mm Zuiko Digital ED Mx2 f4-5.6	£338.99	or £10 mth
70-300mm f4.0-5.6	£319	or £13 mth
EC-14 Tele Converter x1.4	£349	or £16 mth
EC-20 Teleconverter	£379	or £16 mth
TCXN-17 Tele Conversion Lens	£99	
EX-25 Extension Tube 25mm	£139	

1689	or £28 mth
£199	
£194.95	
£449	or £19 mth
£1399	or £57 mth
£735	or £30 mth
£829	or £34 mth
£210	or £9 mth
£424.99	or £18 mth
£419	or £17 mth
£1949	or £79 mth
£999	or £41 mth
£338.99	or £10 mth
£319	or £13 mth
£349	or £16 mth
£379	or £16 mth
£99	
£139	

TAMRON LENSES

90mm SP Di Macro	£334.99	or £14 mth
180mm f3.5 AF SP Di	£749.99	or £31 mth
300mm f2.8 AF SP (Canon Fit)	£2449.99	or £100 mth
10-24mm f3.5-4.5 Di II LD ASP IF	£379.99	or £16 mth
17-50mm f2.8 AF XR Di II LD ASP F	£333.99	or £14 mth
18-200mm f3.5-6.3 AF XR Di II	£158.99	
18-250mm Di II	£369.99	or £15 mth
28-75mm f2.8 SP AF Di	£359.99	or £15 mth
28-80mm f3.5-5.6 AF	£393.99	
28-200mm f3.5-5.6 AF XR Di ASP F	£259.99	or £11 mth
28-300mm AF XR Di	£319.99	or £13 mth
28-300mm AF VC Di	£509.99	or £21 mth
55-200mm f4-5.6 AF Di II LD Macro	From £104.99	
70-200mm f2.8 SP Di (Canon Fit)	£469.99	or £20 mth
70-200mm f2.8 SP Di (Nikon/Sony/Pentax)	£624.99	or £26 mth
70-300mm f4-5.6 AF Di LD Macro 1:2	£123.99	
200-500mm f5-6.3 SP AF Di	£859.99	or £35 mth

Tokina LENSES

35mm f2.8 DX ATX PRO AF Macro	£299.99	or £14 mth
100mm f2.8 Macro ATX M100 AT-X	£249.99	or £10 mth
100mm f2.8 D AT-X Macro	£48.99	or £11 mth
10-17mm f3.5-4.5 DX AT-X	£479.99	or £16 mth
11-16mm f2.8 DX ATX PRO AF	£439.44	or £18 mth
11-16mm f2.8 DX ATX PRO AF	£489.99	or £18 mth
12-24mm f4 DX AT-X	£439.99	or £15 mth
16-50mm f2.8 DX AT-X	£499.99	or £22 mth
50-135mm f2.8 DX AT-X NAF	£499.99	or £22 mth
80-400mm f4.5-5.6 D AT-X C/AF	£499.99	or £20 mth

£299.99	or £14 mth
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£489.99	or £18 mth
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40mm f2.3 DA SMC	£239.99	or £10 mth
50mm f1.4 FA	£169	
50mm f2.3 D FA Macro SMC	£339	or £14 mth
70mm f2.4 DA	£339.99	or £14 mth
100mm f2.8 D FA Macro SMC	£386.99	or £16 mth
10-17mm f3.5-4.5 DA Fisheye	£329	or £14 mth
12-24mm f4 DA ED AL [IF]	£524.99	or £22 mth
16-45mm f4 DA ED AL SMC	£304.99	or £14 mth
16-50mm f2.8 DA* ED	£476.99	or £20 mth
17-70mm f4 AL DA (IF) SMC Lens	£339.99	or £14 mth
18-35mm f4-5.6 SMC FA J	£175.19	
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18-55mm f3.5-5.6 SMC DA AL	£127.72	
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SX1 IS		£429
SX200 IS	WAS £289.99	£269.99

IXUS Models:

95	WAS £179	£164
870 IS		£215
NEW IXUS 990		£319

PowerShot G10 **£379**
— WAS £399

Nikon

Coolpix Models:

L19	£86
L20	£109
L100	£219.99
S220	£124
S620	WAS £209.99 £199
S630	£243
P90 (Black)	£359

Coolpix P6000 **£309**
— or £13/mth

SONY

CyberShot Models:

S930	£79
S950	£97
W210	£129
W220	WAS £154.99 £149
W270	£194
W300	£199
T900	WAS £242 £239
T900	£309.99
H20	WAS £249 £222.99
H50	£239
HX1	£424

Cyber-shot DSC-T500 **£179**
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FinePix Models:

J250w	£135
Z30fd	WAS £139 £129
Z33WP	WAS £169 £148
S2000HD	£174
F200EXR	WAS £279 £249
Big Job HD-3W	£289

Finepix S100fs Long Zoom **£342**
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Mju 5000 **£157**
Mju 7000 (Bik) WAS £249 **£209**
Mju 6000 **£157**
Mju 9000 **£244**
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Mju 6000 **£214**
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G600 WAS £341.57 **£324.99**
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SIGMA

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500/500 Travelpak Kit £1349 or £55mth
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400/400 Travelpak Kit £989 or £41mth

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Digital Studio Flash

D-Lite 2+4 at a glance

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Switchable Audio Ready Bleep
Stabilized to +/- 1.5%
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• 8.9 - 14ppm Colour
• A3+ or less
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• 6 Colour ink
• CD/DVD Printing

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• 8ppm Colour
• A3+
• 8 Colour ink

• 2880 x 1440 dpi
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• 12m² pH B&W
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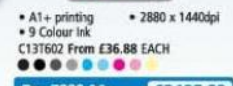


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• 7200 x 7200dpi
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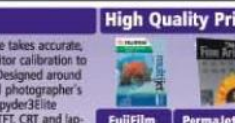
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• 1920x1200 max resolution
• 16ms refresh rate
• 800:1 Contrast

• 1920x1200 max resolution
• 16ms refresh rate
• 800:1 Contrast

• 1920x1200 max resolution
• 16ms refresh rate
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• 1920x1200 max resolution
• 16ms refresh rate
• 800:1 Contrast

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WHY BUY? Hardworking shoulder bags for Photojournalists. Designed to look like every day bags and featuring Lowepro's patented All Weather Covers. Available in Black or Sepia finish. The 250AW also takes a 15" Laptop.

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FastPack 350 (pictured) Takes Pro D-SLR's, 4/5 lenses, flash, 17" laptop & accessories - was £74.99 **SAVE £15** **£59.99**

FastPack 100 D-SLR, 2 lenses and accessories was £44.99 **SAVE £7** **£37.99**

FastPack 200 Pro D-SLR, 2/3 lenses, flash & accessories was £54.99 **SAVE £10** **£44.99**

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Vertex Photo Backpacks

Comfortable & protective. 100/200AW carry-on most airlines. Built-in All Weather cover.

Vertex 100 AW 1/2 Pro D-SLR's, 4/5 lenses, 14" Laptop, flash and accessories **£69.99**

Vertex 200 AW (pictured) 1/2 Pro D-SLR's, 5/6 lenses, 15.4" Laptop, flash & accessories **£104.99**

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WHY BUY? Takes large Pro outfit. With flip round access & All Weather cover. Available in Black or Pine Green.

£74.99

Flipside 200 D-SLR, 3/4 lenses, flash & accessories **£49.99**

Flipside 300 Pro D-SLR, 4/5 lenses, flash & accessories **£56.99**

Nova AW Shoulder Bags

WHY BUY? Top seller redesigned for the digital age. Available in Black, Burgundy Red, Brown & Blue.

170 AW **£32.99**
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190 AW **£47.99**
140 AW **£24.99**
160 AW **£28.99**
200 AW **£53.99**

Stealth Reporter AW Shoulder Bags

WHY BUY? Soft, comfortable design offering excellent protection. All Weather cover.

100 AW D-SLR, 2 lenses and accessories **£56.99**
200 AW Pro D-SLR, 3/4 lenses, flash & accessories **£59.99**
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Slingshot AW

WHY BUY? Carry on your back, then sling round to open. Built-in All Weather cover.

Slingshot 100 AW D-SLR, 2 lenses and accessories **£44.99**

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Designed for everyday adventures.



Earth Explorer Shoulder Bags

WHY BUY? Natural canvas style with lots of pockets.

Small D-SLR with lens & accessories **£39.99**

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Large NEW! **£109.99**



3N1 Sling Backpacks

PRE-INCREASE PRICES (available while stocks last)

WHY BUY? 3-in-1 = Full harness, left sling harness or right sling harness. Very clever, practical design with Full Rain Cover. Just swing round for quick-draw access!

3N1 - 10 **£63.99**

3N1 - 20 (pictured) **£69.99**

3N1 - 30 **£99.99**

DPS Photo Backpacks

WHY BUY? Fast/secure access, TST protection & Elements cover.

DS-465 D-SLR, 2/3 lenses, flash & personal gear **£47.99**

DS-467 (pictured) Pro D-SLR, 3/4 lenses, flash, laptop, etc **£64.99**

GDC Photo Rucksacks

WHY BUY? Modern, slim design with ultra comfortable harness. Fast access & TST protection. Elements cover. Tripod mount and InterTrolly.

R-101 D-SLR's, 3/4 lenses, flash & accs **£89.99**

R-102 D-SLR's, 4/5 lenses, flash & accs **£119.99**

R-103 (pictured) D-SLR's, 4/5 lenses, flash, 15.4" laptop & accessories **£129.99**

WHY BUY? Very high protection, comfortable harness & full weather protection. Fits 2-3 D-SLR camera bodies with battery grips, up to 8 lenses (up to 400 mm), flashgun, accessories and 15" laptop rrp £249.99

R-106 **£189.99**

GDC Hiker Backpacks

WHY BUY? VERY comfortable harness. TST protection. Tripod mount & InterTrolly.

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GDC Elements Covers

Ultimate weather protection for D-SLR's

E-690 for D-SLR with std zoom lens **£33.99**

E-702 (pictured) Pro D-SLR with standard zoom lens **£44.99**

E-704 add to E-702 for Pro tele-zoom lens **£44.99**



Midi Satchell **£79.99**

Medium Satchell **£109.99**

Small Rucksack **£139.99**

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Earth Explorer Backpacks

Small D-SLR, 2 lenses, flash & personal items **£99.99**



Medium (pictured) D-SLR, 2/3 lenses, 17" Laptop & personal items **£99.99**



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No One Carries It Off Better

Aero Speed Pack 85 Dual Access Photo Backpack

WHY BUY? Innovative Sling Backpacks with water resistant zips. Holds Pro DSLR with Pro Zoom, 2-3 more lenses, Flash, up to 17" Laptop plus personal items up top. rrp £115 **SAVE £55**

£69.99



Expedition 5X Photo Backpack

While stocks last! RRP £139.99 **SAVE £80**

£59.99

Expedition 6X **£89.99**

Expedition 7X **£119.99**



Velocity Sling Packs

WHY BUY? Comfortable to carry on your back then sling round for front use. Lightweight & compact.

Velocity 10X 2x Pro D-SLR's, 2-3 Pro lenses, flash & accessories **£56.99**

Velocity 7X D-SLR, 2/3 lenses, Flash & accessories **£37.88**

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Velocity 9X Pro D-SLR, 3/4 Pro lenses, Flash & accs **£50.99**

Adventure Daypacks

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Adventure 10 1/2 Pro D-SLR's, 5/6 lenses, flash, 17" laptop & accs **£94.99**

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WHY BUY? Improved version for large D-SLR outfit and 15" Laptop. WHILE STOCKS LAST! rrp £119.99 **SAVE £60**

£59.99



Pro Shoulder Bags

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Ultra Pro 11 ideal for the professional photographer carrying two DSLRs with lenses attached, 3-4 additional lenses, flashes, accessories and a small laptop

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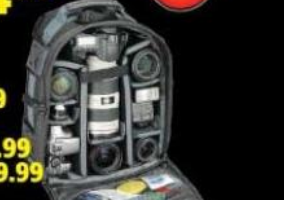
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EOS 50D + 17-85 F4/5.6 IS U	£1097
EOS 50D + 18-200 F3.5/5.6	£1147
EOS 500D body	£598
EOS 500D + 18-55 F3.5/5.6 IS	£677
EOS 500D + 18-200 F3.5/5.6 IS	£997
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EOS 40D + 17-85 F4/5.6 IS U	£879
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18-55 F3.5/5.6 VR DX no box	£179
18-105 F3.5/5.6 G	£219
ED VR unboxed	£219
18-200 F3.5/5.6 VR DX	£517
55-200 F4/5.6 VR DX	£249
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10-20 F4/5.6 EX DC	£389
12-24 F4.5/5.6	£629
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WANTED

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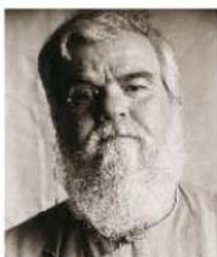
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Roger Hicks

... GIVES HIS TAKE ON THE BATTLE OF THE SEXES AND OFFERS A GUIDE TO FLIRTING – WITH CAMERAS, OF COURSE



ROGER HICKS is a much-published author on photography. He has written more than three dozen books on the subject, many in partnership with his wife, Frances Schultz. Roger started photography as a teenager in the 1960s and worked professionally in a London advertising studio in the mid-1970s. He has been a freelance photographer/writer since 1981, contributing to many photography magazines, including 'Shutterbug' in America. Visit his website at www.rogerandfrances.com.

FLIRTING is such a basic skill that it really ought to be taught in schools. I say this in light of the lamentably low standards of parental instruction nowadays: flirting is something one should learn from one's parents. I certainly learned it from mine.

But what do I mean by flirting? No more, and no less, than the paying of compliments to those members of the opposite sex who deserve them. Given my gender, in the examples that follow, I will take the male side. Female readers should not have much difficulty in making the necessary adjustments to the requisite pronouns.

All right, who deserves these compliments? Well, anyone to whom you would be even moderately attracted, if you were not otherwise engaged – or indeed, otherwise married.

To the object of your flirtation – the flirtee, shall we say – such compliments serve three purposes. First, and most important, they make them feel better and boost their self-confidence. Even if you are completely happy with your partner, it is always reassuring to know you are still attractive to others. If it is not reassuring, you probably aren't attractive, even to your partner.

Second, if either party is not totally happy with their partner, it leaves the options open. To be sure, both parties need to be unhappy and in need of a change, but even if only one is in that unfortunate situation, the losing side (as it were) still has the benefit of the first advantage – and who knows what the morrow may bring?

Third, it is a handy exercise in sociability. The most outrageous compliment, in the right place, is seldom unwelcome. Flirting helps you to establish which compliments are too outrageous, and which are too unwelcome. There is a big difference between flirtation and sexual harassment. If there isn't, you're doing it wrong.

So what is the relevance of flirtation to photography? It is not difficult to see, surely? Most of us are more or less faithful to one camera, perhaps to one format, maybe even to a single brand. Yet unlike a marriage (or an engagement, or any long-term commitment), the choice of a camera has almost nothing in the way of a moral dimension. We can be fickle, we can chop and change with a clear conscience, we can even enjoy multiple lovers. The only parallel – which is very important – is that we need to know when to be fickle, and when to stay faithful. We need to know when, in short, we have more to gain from our fickleness, and when we have more to lose.

As in some other columns, I apologise for drawing parallels between so trivial a matter as choosing a camera and so important a matter as breaking a heart,

though I have to confess that since I started using Leicas I have had three fiancées, and married two of them, so I have been more faithful to the Leicas. In mitigation I will say that in the first engagement we were both very young (almost

certainly too young, though we both used Leicas) and that the third engagement led to a marriage that started in 1982 and is rock solid to this day. If I had to give up my either my wife or my Leicas tomorrow, well, goodbye Leicas.

Perhaps more to the point, camera advertisers try to get us to commit to a marriage when an *affaire* might be more appropriate. We need to know when to trifle with a camera's affections, when to be a *roué* who takes advantage of an innocent young camera, or perhaps to engage in a brief but passionate romance with one that is more experienced, such as my Pentacon Six from the 1960s. I picked her up in Prague, in the Czech Republic, a few years ago. It comes hard to me to realise that she is now more than 40 years old, and that I am far from her first lover; but then I think how I was well into my teens before she was even born.

This sort of facile parallel may be of use in our lives outside photography. It can help us decide what is important, and what isn't. Let's be honest: compared to the people we love or care about, photography just isn't all that important, and cameras are still less important. Otherwise, we have got our priorities wrong. **AP**

Compared to the people we love or care about, photography just isn't all that important, and cameras are still less important. Otherwise, we have got our priorities wrong

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